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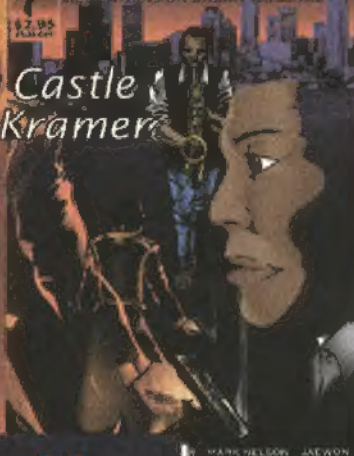
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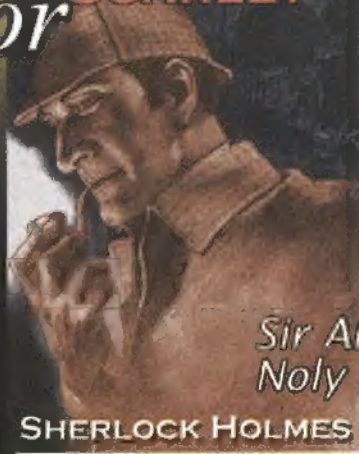
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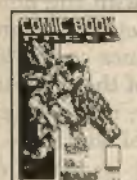
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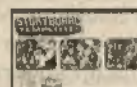
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This week in CBG



On the cover

Captain Atom flew through Charlton's skies in the '60s and '70s until he and his Charlton cohorts were acquired by DC in the early 1980s and introduced to DC readers during *Crisis on Infinite Earths*. Via Marc Patten, Former Charlton Editor Dick Giordano details how he was able to turn out several memorable super-heroes on a limited budget. Check it out on Page 28. And you'll find news about those Charlton heroes and their DC existence on Page 6.

Two other teams (and teamings) of super-heroes have excited fans for more than 35 years. The annual team-

ups of The Justice Society of America and The Justice League of America ended with *Crisis* in 1985, but they may come back to a comics rack near you. Scott Brick looks back and ahead, aided by Mark Waid and James Robinson, on Page 40. Art is © 1998 DC Comics.

Industry news

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Rozakis leaves DC6

CBG Cover Contest Winners

A number of readers sent in lists identifying many of the items on the cover of *CBG* #1295. We'll have a list of the items next week, but we want to congratulate grand prize winner **Walter C. Price** of S. Hadley, Mass., who receives both a copy of the 1973 edition of *The Comic-Book Book* and a copy of the new edition, recently released by Krause Publications.

We were so impressed by the quality of the entries that, instead of two runner-ups, we chose four entrants to receive their own copies of the new edition of *The Comic-Book Book*. The winners are: **Roland Coover**, West Chester, Pa.; **Bill Gaitens**, Bloomington, Ill.; **Cole Dulmage**, Clarksville, Ind.; and **Howard L. Davis**, Pitman, N.J. Congratulations — and thanks for playing!

But I Digress by Peter David 66

When reality touches fiction, problems can outweigh entertainment.

Point of View by Mark Evanier 44

Here come de judge, here come de judge ...

Tony's Tips by Tony Isabella 20

With the help of *Entertainment Weekly*, Tony provides links between comics and science-fiction.

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Those thrilling days

I had a vacation last week which has to qualify as one of the best ever.

It occurred at the convention I've recommended to readers in the past: the Friends of Old Time Radio's annual get-together in, yes, Newark, N.J. In a Holiday Inn with some pretty pricey meals, no less. In October, to boot.

You know what it offers attendees? Among the attractions:

- A dynamite organizer who makes attendees want to pitch in. (Among the volunteers were wives of some of the celebrity guests, no less! They handled con registration for most of the show!)

- A bunch of attendees who are eager to encourage and talk with people they've never met before about what it is they love about their hobby.

- An absence of obsession with how much a treasure is worth financially.

- A politeness about aspects which don't personally interest other attendees.

- An unabashed admiration for what people loved as children.

- A yearning for a new generation of fans.

- An opportunity to revisit childhood through today's media.

And the con is so small that even newcomers can have their own, individual five or 10 minutes with the pros they adore. There are odd similarities and differences between the fields of comic books and radio drama. Radio conventions are tiny compared to comics conventions — possibly because radio drama is heard by a smaller percentage of the potential audience than even comic books reach today. (At least in this country; the BBC provides its listeners with ongoing, state-of-the-art productions, some of which are released as audiobooks in America.) But the audience of radio drama at its height consisted of multiples of the total circulation of comic books: millions and millions of listeners in the 20th century. Radio stories play out in the theater of the mind, with actors' voices providing clues of appearance — clues which can be wonderfully misleading. Comics stories can depict setting, costumes, and character designs more fanciful than those of Industrial Light and Magic.

But both can bring us memories.

Fresh in my mind are memories of this show — and a magic moment. Sometime comics colorist (and all-the-time Superman and Shadow expert) Anthony Tollin had dreamed for years of directing a re-creation of an old *Superman* radio serial in multiple parts; it was a dream that came to fruition when the five-part climax of the "Atom Man" serial was produced over the three days of the show. Included in the cast were the original narrator, Jackson Beck (he of the electrifying voice that brought such varied characters as The Cisco Kid and Bluto to life). And the original villain: Mason Adams (Charlie Hume on *Lou Grant*, voice-overs for Smucker's and Cadbury chocolates). There were other voice artists whose work I had followed: Arthur Anderson (whom I used to hear on *Let's Pretend* and whose roles have included the Lucky Charms leprechaun) and Richard Beals (who played virtually every little kid on *Suspense* — and Ralph Phillips in two of my favorite Chuck Jones cartoons). George Ansburo played Superman; Beals played Jim Olsen; Anderson and Earl George played a number of roles; and Beck also played Perry White. Even the sound effects were by giants in their field: Bob Mott and Ray Erlenborn. Paradise — with a problem.

These veterans were having problems with their lines. Long story short: The scripts were blow-ups from microfilms of marked-up scripts and were almost unreadable. So my daughter, Valerie, my brother, Paul Curtis, and I spent Saturday morning retyping — and the final two episodes were triumphs of excitement, with Adams sending chills up my arms, as he screamed, "Die, Superman!" and burst into maniacal laughter. Wish you could have been there, folks. Over the top delight, let me tell you. And I had more magic moments, thanks to Anthony — since he cast me as Lois Lane for Episode Four. Yep. I actually got to act with some of my favorite performers — and I have my autographed script to bring it all back.

Thanks, Anthony. And thanks, too, Valerie and Paul. Thrilling days do not have to be limited to yesteryear.

— Maggie Thompson

Contest deadlines

CBG Price Guide — Nov. 10

CBG Lucky #1300 — Dec. 15

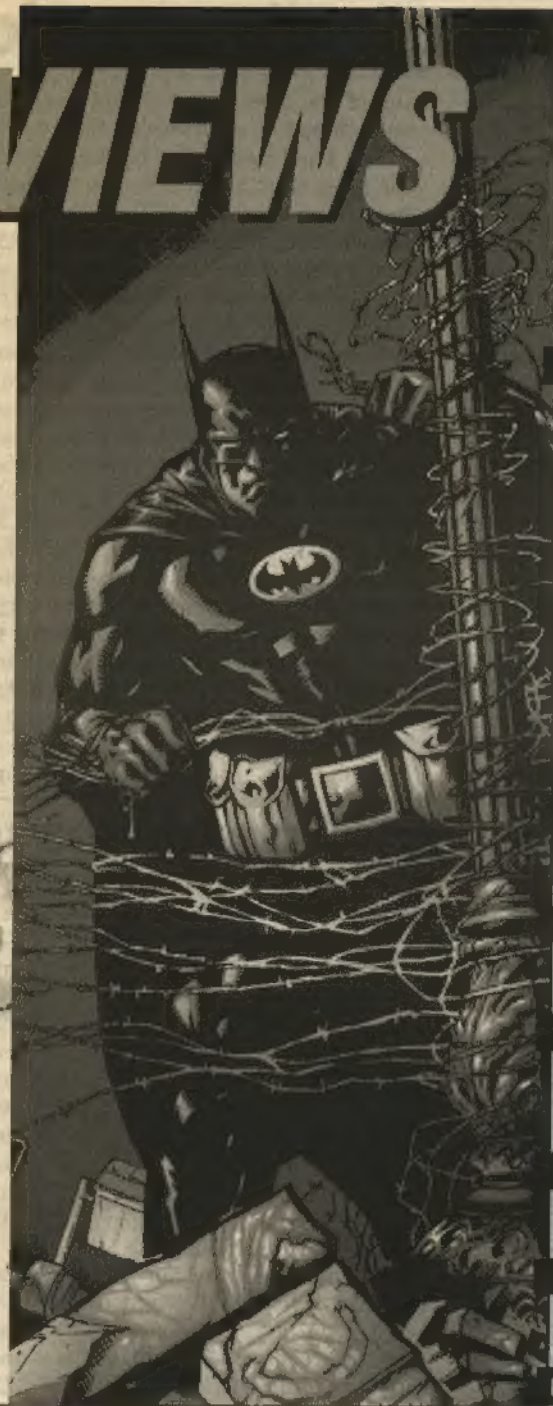
CBG Mystery — (see the Trader ads)

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It's November—give thanks for the latest and greatest offerings from PREVIEWS! On the front cover:

The rumors are true—DC and WildStorm have become one! Around back, the bounty hunter with an attitude returns in Dark Horse's *Star Wars: Boba Fett—Enemy of the Empire!*

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PREMIER

Alan Moore looks back on a Victorian Age that might have been in *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*

from DC!

Also:

- Dark Horse offers the next chapter of the *Star Wars* saga, *Star Wars: Crimson Empire III*
- This ain't no *Junior Justice League*—DC celebrates Titans Month!
- Thrill to the melodies of KISS with the *KISS: Psycho Circus Arena Edition Ultra Action Figures* from Image and Todd McFarlane!
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Geppi, Milo call acquisition good news for direct market

By Patrick Daniel O'Neill

Steve Geppi and Steve Milo recently said that the deal that made Geppi the majority shareholder in Another Universe.com will benefit the entire direct market in the long run. The foremost example they cited is the decision to offer Another Universe's many exclusive products to retailers through Diamond Comics Distributors' *Previews* catalog.

As reported in *CBG* #1304, Diamond CEO and President Geppi acquired the controlling interest in Milo's company after outside capital investment opportunities for Another Universe dried up. "It's not easy to sum up all the reasons for doing this," Geppi told *CBG*. "Another Universe was Diamond's largest account and we also have a large receivable interest in Another Universe. Our interest was first driven by the economics of the situation — we could not afford to let that account just disappear."

Despite the reactions from some segments of the comic-book retailing com-

munity complaining of monopoly, concentrations of power, and conflicts of interest, the decision to make Another Universe exclusives available to all retailers through Diamond may help alleviate some objections. "The merchandise will be available at the traditional discounts for limited-edition material," Milo said. "I think this is the right step to defuse one of the more emotional issues of this transaction: the feeling that retailers had that Another Universe had unfair access to product. We're trying to be very supportive of the retail community by making certain they will have full access to all exclusive and variant product that Another Universe produces with its publishing partners."

Geppi said that the Internet and the World Wide Web are unavoidable parts of the changing nature of all retailing. His goal, he said, was to use that technology "to drive more customers into the retail stores. I think this can replace the loss of exposure that occurred with the downsiz-

ing of the direct market and the loss of some 3,000 or so stores in the past five years. The Internet can be the safety net for sales that publishers can't afford to lose. In my perfect world, comics customers will shop at comics shops; only when they cannot find a shop in their area, or a particular title is not carried by their local shop, will we preserve that sale by having the stuff available on the Internet. It's basically the same argument publishers use regarding subscriptions."

Both Geppi and Milo strongly dispute the idea that Another Universe's website and mail-order operations service the same customers as the retail stores. Milo said, "The first argument you'll hear from some retailers is, 'Steve Geppi is now in direct competition with me, trying to sell the same product to the same people.' Research indicates that mail-order buyers and store shoppers are not the same people. Mail-order buyers do not frequent retail stores. An Internet site that does not discount does not compete

with the retail stores."

In fact, Geppi pointed out that Another Universe's website now includes the Comic Shop Locator Service toll-free number, so that web browsers can find a comics retailer in their own areas.

On a related note, Geppi said he did not think the Another Universe acquisition would make either Diamond or Geppi himself a stronger focus of the current Justice Department anti-trust queries about the comic-book industry. "Justice is not looking at Diamond specifically in terms of anti-trust; they are looking at the comics industry as a whole," he said. "I don't think this makes Diamond any more prominent in that investigation. I already owned retail stores, so all this really is, is a volume increase. If the Justice Department were to make a determination that there are unfair, monopolistic practices by anyone, there has to be some evidence of the unfairness — and our intention is to make the situation more fair, not less."



Production Chief Bob Rozakis leaves DC after 25 years

By Patrick Daniel O'Neill

DC Executive Director — Production Bob Rozakis has left that position after 25 years with the company in a variety of positions, all generally involved in the production department.

"Let's say I'm leaving by mutual agreement," Rozakis told *CBG*. "To quote Yogi Berra, 'When you come to a fork in the road, take it.'"

In addition to his production duties over the years, Rozakis also wrote for DC, including a critically acclaimed run on his own character 'Mazing Man' with artist Stephen DiStefano — and a look at the lesser lights of the DC super-heroes in *Hero Hotline*. He was also "The Answer Man" on DC's in-house information pages in the 1970s and '80s, responding to reader questions about the history of the company and characters. And, early in his career, he drove the DC Comics van

throughout Long Island, N.Y., in an attempt to sell comics like ice cream bars.

Examining options. Now, separated from DC for the first time in a quarter-century, Rozakis said he is unsure where his next move will be. "I'm exploring brave new worlds — inside publishing, outside publishing, possibly working with comic-book publishers and possibly not," he said. "Obviously, I've got lots of experience and connections within the comic-book industry. I'm looking for things I find interesting and challenging."

He added that he hopes to find more time for writing. "I'm not burning any bridges. In fact, just before I left I spoke to Mike Carlin and Joey Cavalieri about an Elseworlds possibility," he said. "Certainly, when the groundswell movement for the return of 'Mazing Man' finally reaches the cacophony that it needs to, I

will be more than happy to drag Stephen DiStefano out of his home in Queens and make him draw whatever we can come up with."

Comics changes. Rozakis' 25 years with DC saw a major shift in the ways comics are produced and printed, and Rozakis was instrumental in many of those changes. "When I started with the company, we had 28 people on staff and did 20 or 25 32-page, letter-press printed, newsstand-distributed comic books a month. That was the only format. They were hand-separated, with a palette of 64 colors. That was a comic book," he recalled. "In the interim, we discovered the 20th century and offset printing."

"One of the major contributions I made was the 'Mando format.' We were publishing a few titles — *Legion of Super-Heroes*,
(Continues on Page 12)

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DC: The second coming of Charlton

By Marc Patten

In 1984, Paul Levitz, then DC Comics' vice president of operations, decided to give Dick Giordano a present. Levitz was familiar with the VP and executive editor's career in the 1960s at Charlton Publishing and, as a young fan, Levitz had grown fond of the heroes Giordano had helped to launch there.

After consulting with Giordano regarding whom to contact, he secured permission to purchase the entire stable of Charlton comics characters. "He enjoyed reading those characters and thought we should have them," said Giordano. "He gave them to me and said, 'Here, do what you want.'" The problem, however, was that DC was in the middle of *Crisis on Infinite Earths*, which Giordano was also inking, and there was no time to consider such a revival. So there the characters sat, making brief cameos in *Crisis* and *Who's Who*, until one by one many were revived into ongoing DC continuity. Those revivals began with The Blue Beetle in his own title in mid-1986 — six months after *Crisis* ended.

During those revamps, Giordano's involvement was almost non-existent. His plate was full, and he had no time to head a new line of characters. "I didn't have much to do with the way they were used. In each case the decisions were made by the individual editor. Sarge

Steel was put in as the head of a United States intelligence agency — which came out of his days as a secret agent at Charlton, which I had nothing to do with. When I left off on Sarge Steel he was a private detective, and in my mind he's a private detective today," Giordano laughed.

Now, years later in his retirement (although he's awfully busy for someone who's retired), Giordano finally gets to play with characters he looked out for 30 years ago, as he teams with fellow inker and writer Bob Layton in DC's Charlton heroes crossover event.

A 'Portfolio' of Charlton characters. Layton, along with buddy Roger Stern, published a handful of fanzines in the early '70s, while living in Indiana. One such issue (called *Charlton Portfolio*) was an overview of the comics featuring the previous decade's Charlton heroes. Layton was in contact with Bill Pearson, the company's art director, and Nick Cuti, who was the assistant editor in chief of Charlton. One day an intriguing proposition was made to the budding artist. "They said, 'Hey, we have all of this material sitting in inventory that we never ran from the original series. Would you guys like to publish it?' and we said sure," Layton described. "The next thing we know, this big package

shows up which included a complete Captain Atom story in pencil form by Ditko, and a fully pencilled, inked, and written Blue Beetle story by Ditko. As fans, we went absolutely crazy."

With Charlton's permission, Layton and friends convinced the Charlton folks to let them help promote the company's new comics projects while publishing the old material. They came up with a black-and-white magazine called *Charlton Bullseye*. The series ran five bi-monthly issues and sold about 10,000 copies per issue, with help from direct-market pioneers Phil Seuling and Bud Plant. "The two of them pretty much bought the entire print runs and distributed East and West Coast," Layton said.

The Captain Atom story by Ditko was split between #1 and #2 and was inked by John Byrne and written by Roger Stern. Issue #5 featured a new Question story by Alex Toth and Mike Uslan, and #4 and #5 featured John Byrne's last *Doomsday + 1* story.

Layton moved to Florida, where Giordano resides, several years ago, and the two began to meet frequently for lunch. "He was my mentor," Layton explained. "He taught me much of what I know, especially on the business side. One day we were lamenting that we'd known each other for 25 years and had never worked together."



On that occasion, the two discussed their mutual love for the old Charlton characters and their connections with them, and the collaboration began. The project was originally proposed as an Elseworlds project that the powers at DC liked so much they moved the story into the mainstream DC universe. So far, the project has been almost two years in the making and will be written and inked by Layton and pencilled by Giordano.

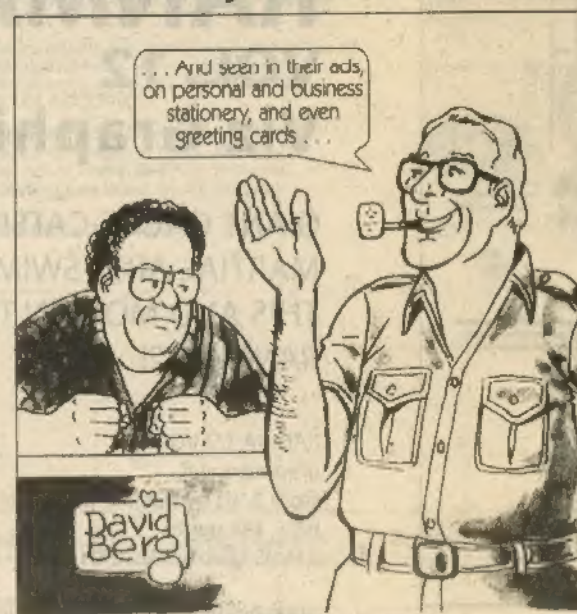
The catalyst for the story is the return of the original Judomaster, Rip Jagger, and the story of where the character has been all these years. Layton described Judomaster as kind of a Zen Captain America. "His favorite saying is,

(Continues on Page 12)

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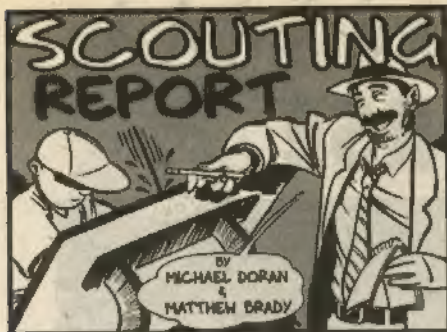
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Lady Pendragon meets Brigid.

While crossovers between the Big Two may have died down for the moment, they are still popular between small-press titles. The latest case in point: Image's Lady Pendragon and Brigid the Protector from Liar Comics' *More than Mortal* series will cross swords this spring in a two-issue series.

"*More than Mortal* is a fabulous series and one of the few that has a story line that naturally crosses into Lady Pendragon's world," Lady Pendragon writer and creator Matt Hawkins said. "The story takes place within the continuity of both series and will have lasting ramifications in both of them."

According to *More than Mortal* co-writer Sharon Scott, Liar Comics has been approached many times for possible crossovers; however, Liar's first goal was to establish their characters before teaming them. "I feel like we have now reached that goal," Scott said. "The premise behind Lady Pendragon is fantastic, and I

think we have some exciting new surprises planned for the readers in this project." The two crossover comics are scheduled to ship in May and June.

SUPREME

Ross gives Supreme a facelift.

Supreme, Awesome's most critically acclaimed series and victim of the Awesome implosion, is preparing for an imminent return with a new look courtesy of Alex Ross.

The deal, according to Awesome President Rob Liefeld, came about thanks to talks with Ross for a cover illustration for a collection of Alan Moore-written issues of the series. From there, one thing led to another. "Alex has given us tremendous support all around in our efforts to get *Supreme* back on track," Liefeld said. "During the course of our several discussions regarding *Supreme*, I asked Alex if he would consider redesigning the character, and Alex agreed to not only redesign *Supreme* but *Suprema*, the Lady *Supreme*, as well."

The entire redesign deal with Ross includes pencil renditions of *Supreme* as well as a series of model sheets featuring all-around views of *Supreme*'s head and body and a fully painted illustration of *Supreme*'s new look. "Alex expressed his desire to depict a definitive look for *Supreme* that we can distribute to other artists for them to refer to," Liefeld said. "Who in his right mind is going to turn an Alex Ross model sheet down? Not me."

Liefeld confirmed rumors that Moore had had several issues of *Supreme* in the can prior to Awesome's financially induced hiatus last spring. Liefeld is now planning on publishing those issues with Ross' new characters designs incorporated. "*Supreme* is a jewel in our company's crown, which is why we are taking our time to thoughtfully and carefully return the character. We have more than a year's worth of Alan Moore stories yet to tell and are currently in final negotiations with some very talented folks to complete Alan's run. Alan has also expressed interest in doing a third year on the title. *Supreme* will be back with a vengeance." No release date has been set for the relaunch.

Straczynski's 'Rising Stars.' Writer J. Michael Straczynski will bring the storytelling approach that made his creation *Babylon 5* a cult science-fiction phenomenon to Top Cow in 1999. Launching in April with a preview #0 issue, *Rising Stars* is a 24-issue, monthly maxi-series created and written by Straczynski. No artist is yet attached.

"As grandiose as this may sound, my goal is to try and do in comics form something of what I did with *Babylon 5*," said Straczynski. "That is, create something more noteworthy than over-muscled, heavily thewed, and essentially identical characters shouting at each other, which seems to have turned into something of a habit for a lot of comics these days. The kind of writing that has always appealed

to me is the sort of thing you get from Alan Moore and Frank Miller and a handful of others, and what I want to do is to try and go in that kind of direction, where the story operates on several levels, where it challenges what a comics story is supposed to be, that pushes the limits of the form. That, at least for me, is the goal. Yeah, it's kinda lofty. But, then, everybody said I was nuts for trying to do a five-year story arc on *B5* when no one else had ever done it."

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(Continues on Page 12)

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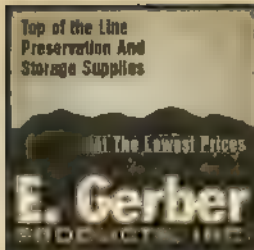
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900M2	9 x 12	Standard Magazines	13.50 (274)	44 (224)	190 (194)
914M2	9 x 14 1/4	Legal Size	18.25 (364)	58 (284)	260 (264)
950M2	9 1/2 x 12 1/4	Sheet Music, Large Mag.	15.50 (314)	50 (254)	220 (224)
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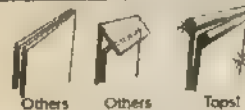
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775R	7 1/2 x 10 1/4	Silver/Gold Comics- 1950's-70's	16.75 (334)	55 (274)	240 (244)
800R	8 x 11	Gold Age Comics- 1940's-50's	17.75 (364)	59 (294)	255 (254)
825R	8 1/4 x 11	Super Gold Age Comics	18.50 (374)	61 (304)	265 (264)
875R	8 1/2 x 11	Large Comics, Mag. & Letter	20.25 (404)	65 (324)	290 (294)
900R	9 x 12	Standard Magazines	24.50 (494)	81 (404)	350 (354)
914R	9 x 14 1/4	Legal Size	29.50 (594)	97 (484)	420 (424)
950R	9 1/2 x 12 1/4	Sheet Music, Large Magazines	26.00 (524)	88 (444)	390 (394)
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725T	7 1/4 x 10 1/4	Standard Comics- 1970's-90's	20.75 (414)	68 (344)	295 (294)	
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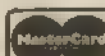
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750FB	7 1/2 x 10 3/4	Silver/Gold Comics - fits 775	10.50 (214)	35 (174)	150 (154)	
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778FB	7 1/2 x 10 1/2	Super Gold Age Comics - fits 825	12.00 (244)	39 (194)	170 (174)	
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SCOUTING

(From Page 10)

years of story-time.

"What makes one person become a hero, while another sells out? What leads one character to deny her abilities while another, not blessed to be among the 118, tries to pretend otherwise, with disastrous results? What's it like when all the characters know each other, know their true names and their secret names, good guys and bad guys alike? What laws for good or ill would be passed to deal with this situation? How are the characters shaped by their abilities and vice versa? These are just some of the questions we'll deal with in *Rising Stars*," said Straczynski. "I very much want to create something exceptional, which is what I think fans of *B5* would expect. And this will either be something exceptional, or I'm going to fall massively on my face. There ain't much room in between, given the story I'm planning to tell, in the way I'm planning to tell it. So whether it's a spectacular success or a spectacular flame-out in front of a huge audience, it should be interesting to watch."



Oni Press in '99.

Oni Press, one of 1998's undisputed comics publishing success stories, will continue to move forward with new eclectic offerings in 1999. In February, a one-shot by Penn Gillette (the larger half of Penn and Teller) and Renee French (*Grit Bath*) makes its debut. The

Adventures of Rheumy Peepers and Chunky Highlights is the strange, funny story of two vaudeville comedians who decide that being super-heroes is their true calling.

In March, those pretty, tough, and full of attitude characters from **Jim Mahfood's** (*Clerks: The Comic Book*) self-published mini-comics, *Grrl Scouts* return in an all-new *Grrl Scouts* mini-series.

April sees the release of a new one-shot by **Jay Stephens** that could be the harbinger of more Stephens' work. Though currently under closely guarded wraps, the secret project promises to showcase the return of characters who are old favorites as well as the introduction of new ones. Also in the formative stages of development are: a project by **Mike Allred** and pop artist **Martin Ontiveros**; an untitled collaboration between **Mike Mignola** and **Oni Double Feature** artist **Troy Nixey**; two new mini-series by Kevin Smith featuring characters from his *View Askew* universe; a new project from **Andi Watson** (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer*); and the reteaming of *Whiteout's* **Greg Rucka** and **Steve Lieber**.

Oni Double Feature also continues with new stories, including a *Blue Monday* strip by **Chynna Clugston-Major** (*Action Girl Comics*), *Bluntman & Chronic* by Smith and Allred; a second *Jay & Silent Bob* story by Smith and Matt Wagner; and a creator-owned feature written by **Paul Dini** and drawn by newcomer **Tom Fowler**.

ROZAKIS

(From Page 6)

Camelot 3000, *New Teen Titans* — on Baxter paper, and Paul Levitz wanted to get a format in between the standard newsprint letter-press titles printed at Sparta, Ill., and the offset Baxter titles printed at Ronalds in Montreal. He had a price in mind, and I sat down with our customer service rep at Ronalds, and we worked it out. We invented the Mando format and by the end of the year we had 16 titles in that format and the rest of the publishers were jumping on the bandwagon. I think that changed the whole direction of comic-book printing and production."

Rozakis also played a major role in the introduction of computerized coloring and separation in comics. "I had a friend who showed me one of the early color art programs back in 1986. I realized the same kind of system could be

adapted for comics. I got in touch with software and hardware companies, many of which wanted us to adapt the art to the software, which wasn't realistic," he noted. "Finally, Graphic Scan in Ireland figured out a way to do it. It took about two years from my first thoughts on the matter to the first working system. We had the computers in-house at first, but, as the coloring shops developed, it became more practical to farm the whole thing out."

"Computerization of things like coloring and lettering has not really resulted in any real time savings for us," Rozakis summed up. "It comes with its own set of problems: You used to run into a problem with a scratched film; now we have a corrupt file. Instead of making a new piece of film, we have to generate a new file. It still has to be fixed. It still all comes down to four colors of ink on paper in the end."

CHARLTON

(From Page 8)

"When all else fails, do the impossible," and he does several times in the story," said Layton.

Nightshade is still Eve Eden but she has now evolved into a much more powerful character with totally new visuals designed by Giordano.

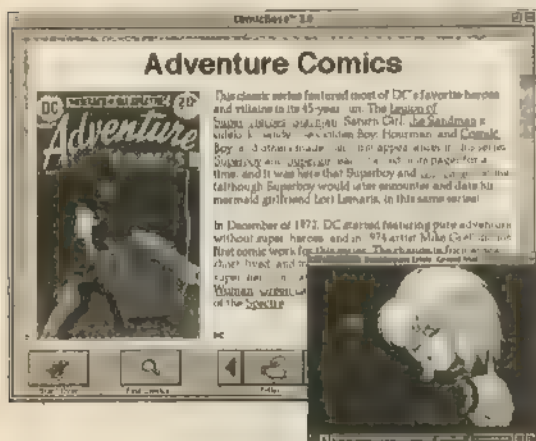
Captain Atom remains his silvery DC self, "... for the time being," Layton teased.

The villain for the series is a new

character called The Avatar, who Giordano and Layton hope will rise to Darkseid-like prominence in the DC universe. "He's a mortal who is a new incarnation of a very powerful Hindu god," is all Layton would reveal. "We're not looking to deconstruct these characters, but, instead, elaborate on them and add some dimension to them that wasn't there before." The series is scheduled to begin in February and will run six monthly 22-page issues.

[For more on the Charlton heroes, see Page 28.]

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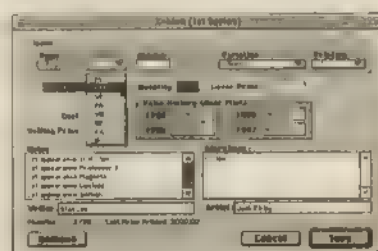


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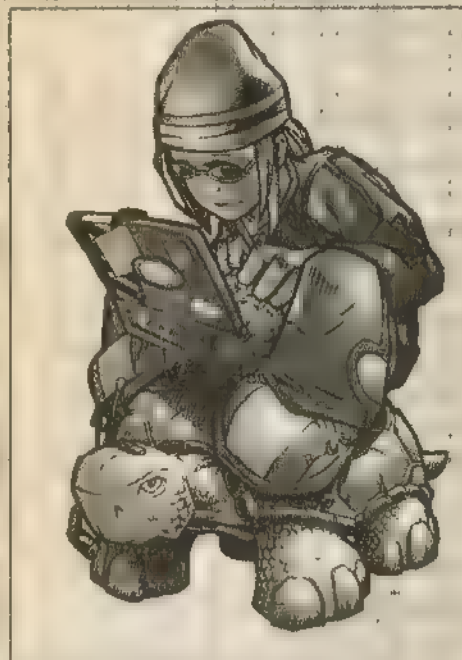
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THE EVOLUTION OF COMICS



...then all of a sudden
you look up from what you're
doing and you realize,
"I'm part of that lifeSTYLE.
I makeup that CULTure.
Something is going on here."

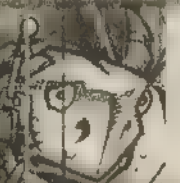
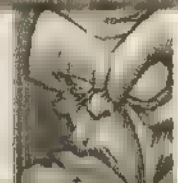
the 'evolution' of comics.

"these things are pretty cool!"

"the beep"

"BURNER"

"SHUT UP"



end trans>

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Oh, So?

From
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see CBG #1297 — keeping in mind that some details are still in the works.

BWF: Vandal Savage has been around since the Golden Age, with his first appearance in *Green Lantern* #10 (Win 43). Also known as *The Immortal Villain*, Savage was a caveman named Vandal Adg who, more than 50,000 years ago, was overcome by fumes from a nearby meteor strike. The fumes made him immortal and, over the centuries, he founded the Illuminati and played a part in many historical events. The meteor also imparted abilities to another caveman, who became known as *Immortal Man*. Each time he died, he was reborn in a different body and opposed many of Savage's schemes through the centuries until he met his final end during *Crisis on Infinite Earths*.

In the 1940s, Savage was a founding member of the *Injustice Society of the World* and, later, became a foe of the various *Flashes*. During one of these latter battles, he captured several members of the disbanded *Justice Society of America*, which reformed after Savage was defeated. His latest appearance was in the recent *DC One Million* mini-series.]

Steve Brumbaugh
2220 College Hill Place
West Linn, OR 97068

The letter in CBG #1302 about Leonardo DiCaprio's father brought back memories. I had wondered whether Leonardo was related to the George DiCaprio I knew back in the mid '70s.

For about a year, I managed Bob's Comics on Hawthorne Blvd. in Hawthorne, Calif., which is one of those interminable suburbs of Los Angeles. Far from being an Italian comic-book publisher, George was a comic-book dealer, as it stated in the website you quoted. I remember his bringing around boxes of underground comics (often with stickers on the covers bringing the prices more up-to-date — like 75¢!) We would buy whatever we could sell to our customers (only visible "under-the-counter," of course). I also seem to remember him doing some of his own underground publishing, but that I can't swear to. Anyway, thanks for ena-

bling a solution to one of life's little mysteries — trivial but interesting.

[Trivial but interesting: That might be one of my goals in life.]

Gary Usher
812 Nuckolls

* Glenwood, IA 51534

George DiCaprio published a couple of issues each of *Forbidden Knowledge Comics* and *Greaser Comics* in the early '70s. These were underground comics, and some of the more rare examples of that genre, I believe. Please consult Jay Kennedy's *Underground Price Guide* for more complete information.

Jim Walls

3310 Wiltshire Dr.
Avondale Estates, GA 30002

In response to the letter from Tim Markin in #1302 about Leonard DiCaprio's father, I pulled out my *Underground Comics Price Guide* from 1982 and found George DiCaprio listed in the very thorough index of credits for underground comix. The book does not list credits for individuals who were publishers but does list all credited writers and artists. George DiCaprio is generally credited as a scripter for the following comic books. Where he is credited with working on most or all of the comic book, I've listed a page count on the amount of his contribution.

Arcade #5

Baloney Moccasins #1 (24 pp.)

Bicentennial Grossouts #1

Cocaine Comix #1-3 (19 pages in #1)

Forbidden Knowledge Comics #1 and #2 (listed as editor of these comic books, and he scripted one story in each)

Greaser Comics #1 (24 pp.) and #2 (20 pp.)

M.L.F. (Mouse Liberation Front) Communique #2 (one page, possibly as artist)

Timothy Leary Neurocomix, co-scripted whole book

Pure Joy Comix #1, #4

Slow Death Funnies #7, #10

Snarf #6, co-scripter

Warren Greenwood's Space Dog #1

Jim Nelson

149 Myrtle Ave.
Stamford, CT 06902

I enjoy your newspaper and was wondering

(Continues on Page 18)



There's a credit for Ben DiCaprio (Leonardo's grandfather, do you suppose?) on "Armistice: 1918" with art by John Edgar, and the story appeared in *Slow Death* #7 (Winter 1976-77), published by *Last Gasp Ecofunnies* © 1977 Ron Turner. Did George DiCaprio script it? The credit on "Bonus Army" in the issue is just for "DiCaprio and [William] Wray" — presumably that was George DiCaprio.

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Once upon a time ...

As *Star Wars* fans anticipate the release of Episode 1 next spring, *CBG* provides a preview of Dark Horse's plans for its most lucrative license. *Star Wars: X-Wing Rogue Squadron* writer Michael Stackpole interviews fellow *Star Wars* writer Jan Strnad about the finer points of navigating the *Star Wars* universe.

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Oh, 50?

From
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about a few things.

- Have you ever bagged a comic book with *CBG*? I have seen cards, comics bags, etc.
- Do you do a lot of photo covers? Can you do some with George Reeves as Superman and the guy who plays NightMan?
- Has there ever been an all-Hembeck issue? Tony Isabella and Peter David writing about him would be fun.
- Any chance of an African-American issue for February 1999?

[We've run complete comics stories in *CBG* but not with the format of a bound-in or bagged comic book. Not yet.]

We don't do a lot of photo covers. We do one now and then, though the ones you suggest here aren't in the works at this point. Fans with an interest in Hembeck should not let their attentions wander. I'll say no more about that for now. We dealt extensively in February for the last two years with African-American contributions to comics. There are no plans for special coverage at that point in 1999 — but that doesn't mean we won't cover the topic. I'll be talking soon with *Mama's Boyz* creator Jerry Craft, for example.]

Gene Evans

9729 152nd Ln.

Mayetta, KS 66509

I really enjoyed the *Crisis* article in *CBG* #1300. I have all the *Crisis* issues except #3, but I'm still wondering about the Golden Age Superman. Your article stated that he was alive, yet gone to heaven.

Will he return to current DC continuity?

In addition, I'd like to see Alexander Luthor (from Earth-3) return, and, while you're at it, bring back Peimon (or create a new version)

Is Dr. Mid-Nite really dead? I certainly hope that Earth-2 can be brought back, as well as all the JSA members, dead or alive. This is comics, after all, and anything is possible.

[Your last sentence answers your questions.]

L.B. Smith

Box 664

Plover, WI 54467

Crisis — After reading page after page of this mess, I realized what happened to the comics market. The "slump" has been attributed to speculators pulling out, not attracting new readers, and alternate forms of entertainment (video games, TV, movies, etc.). Yes, but also from alienating Golden Age and Silver Age readers.

Crisis may have been comics companies' first attempt at the "throw the baby out with the bathwater" technique, but it began a whole trend of killing characters and telling long-time readers they can go to hell.

If I have 2,000 issues from the Golden and Silver Age and have grown up with these characters, do you think I'm going to enjoy a story that says all of this never existed?

Do you think *Amazing Spider-Man* readers who read issues #1-100 enjoyed a story in which the main character was suddenly a clone all these years?

Is this really the only way comics companies can think of to attract new readers? Put a zippy foil cover on it or destroy 50 years of continuity?

While this "slump" in the industry has been going on, have you noticed the soaring prices of Golden and Silver Age books? Somebody out there likes these stories.

Manga — another good example. A Smurf head stuck on a man or woman's body is not my idea of art. Anybody seen Neal Adams, Jim Steranko, or Berni Wrightson lately? How about a Swamp Thing with four-inch eyes? Maybe a gold foil cover and make his home in Antarctica and call him Abominable Manga Swamp Thing. (Watch someone use this.)

I never would have believed years ago that Marvel would have to file bankruptcy. It got where it is now by putting out 13 titles of a character. If one sells, so will they all. Seen Ghost Rider lately? Punisher?

Comics sold years ago because the stories were great, the art was dynamic, the prices were low, and the main character had a history. Have our attention spans become so short that we must change a costume, super-powers, characterization, or issue # every six months?

Are you big companies listening? *Iron Man* #1 was made in 1968. *F.F.* #1 was made in 1961. They are the only #1's that I acknowledge. I'm not buying, and it's gonna stay that way till I read something I like. And I'm not alone.

(I know it may not seem like it, but I really enjoyed issue #1300)

Ray Feighery

4742 42nd Ave. SW, #365

Seattle, WA 98116

I've subscribed for a number of years (and took a bit of light-hearted bashing from you at San Diego when I told you I allowed my subscription to lapse) and I just wanted to take the time again to thank you for putting out this great weekly.

I must say I was amazed at the wealth of information that was in issue #1300. It took me nearly two weeks to read the whole thing, since I usually read it during breaks at work or on the bus. It was great to revisit all the *Crisis* stories as a nice primer to the upcoming hardcover reprint of that classic series. The Hembeck cartoon was a classic, as well!

I, for one, have to say that I am looking forward to having multiple Earths again; that was one of the things that I loved about the DC comics of my childhood.

Thanks again for putting out *CBG* every week in what is clearly a labor of love.

Will Day

P.O. Box 131

Eddington, ME 04428

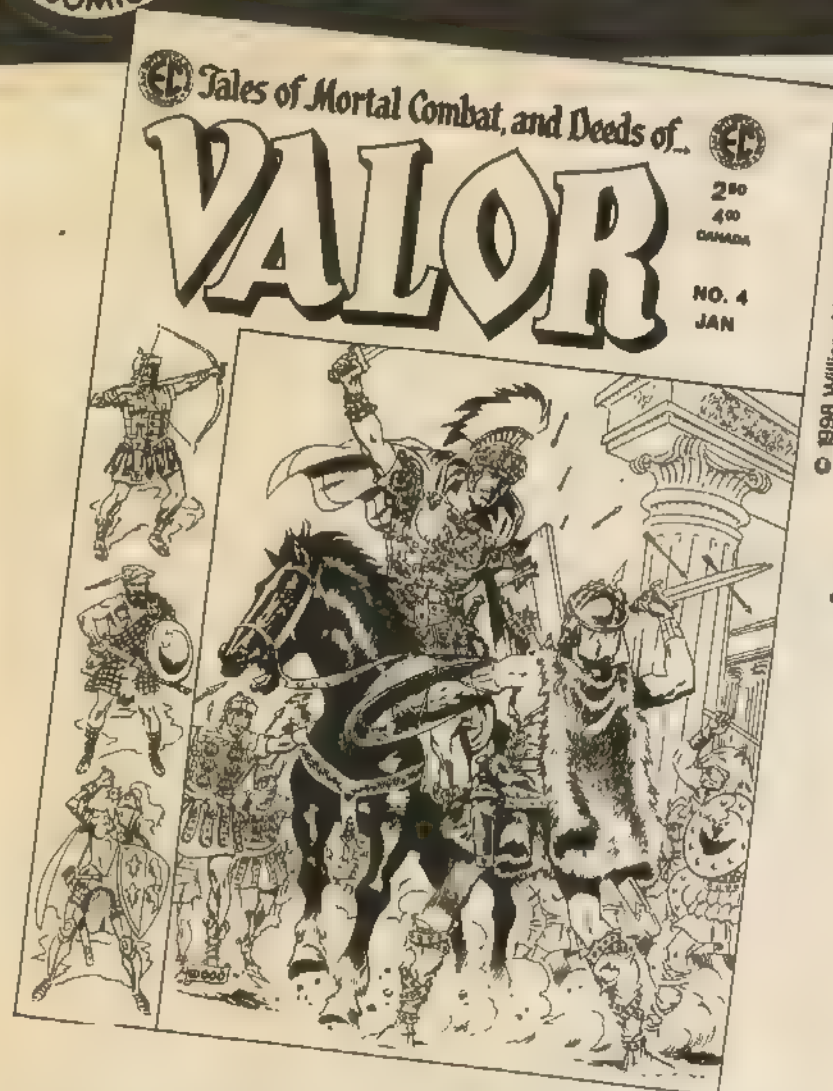
Casper (the friendly ghost) is not a dead baby! He was never alive to begin with! Ghosts are made of the gasses given off by rotting corpses, which is why you always find ghosts in cemeteries. So Casper is really just the byproduct of decayed, putrid, maggot-ridden bodies.

Doesn't that make you feel better?

[Well, you did produce a debate in the office between those who figured you were being facetious and those maintaining that you believe that there are actually ghosts made from corpse decay. (If there were burrows with corpses in them, would they produce corpse tunnel syndrome? Never mind.)]



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"I've had a life crowded by incident and spotted with fascinating individuals. I'll just keep the stories to myself."

— Roddy McDowall
in a 1996 interview

"I have been battling something I cannot win and I am withdrawing from the field with honor."

— McDowall, informing friend
Joanne Carson that his cancer
had been pronounced terminal

"Dark Horse's aggressive schedule of Star Wars mini-series will likely see the company pass Marvel's totals by the year 2000."

Actor Roddy McDowall died Oct. 3 at his home in Studio City, Calif. He was, by all accounts, an exceedingly classy human being and, as was obvious from his performances, a fine actor. I don't really have much more to say about him, save that the above quotes impressed me enormously and that it seemed proper to pay him a bit of respect in this column.

McDowall does have comics connections, of course. He played The Bookworm on the live-action *Batman*

Science-fiction: The comics connection

show and did the voice for another — The Mad Hatter — on the most recent animated *Batman* series. He was also the voice of Snowball on *Pinky and the Brain*. He'll be missed.

This column proper is about *Entertainment Weekly's* listing of "The Sci-Fi 100" in the magazine's Oct. 16 edition. As I read their selections, it immediately struck me how many of the entries had a connection to our beloved comic books.

1. Star Wars. Certainly one of the most successful comic-book licenses of recent times. If you count *Droids*, *Ewoks*, annuals, and reprints, Marvel published about 150 mags based on the George Lucas creation. Blackthorne did a few 3-D comics in the 1980s, while Dark Horse's aggressive schedule of *Star Wars* mini-series will likely see the company pass Marvel's totals by the year 2000.

2. Star Trek. The Gold Key version lasted 61 issues. Marvel and DC added hundreds more during their combined four stints with the license, and one of them will almost certainly be going "where no man has gone before" for a third run. The current total of *Star Trek* comics is just over 450 issues.

3. The Twilight Zone. Over 100 comics published by Gold Key from 1961 to 1982 and Now Comics in the 1990s.

4. Frankenstein. Several publishers have either adapted Mary Shelley's classic novel or based ongoing series on her monstrous creation. Dick Briefer's work in the 1940s and 1950s is terrific, but I also have a fondness for the Mike Ploog-drawn Marvel comics of the 1970s.

5. 2001: A Space Odyssey. Adapted and continued by Jack Kirby for Marvel in the 1970s.

6. Metropolis. Adapted by DC as an Elseworlds one-shot featuring Superman.

7. War of the Worlds. My favorite of the H.G. Wells science-fiction novels. It's been adapted with varying degrees of success by comics publishers and spawned some uneven sequels and/or continuations from Marvel and Caliber. DC has an upcoming Elseworlds featuring Superman based on it.

8. Invasion of the Body Snatchers. One of the great films of all time but, incredibly, it has never been adapted into comics. Somebody's missing a good bet here.

9. Alien/Aliens. Heavy Metal adapted the original movie, but Dark Horse has done more than a hundred *Aliens* comics since getting the license in 1988. Some of them featured concepts from the *Predator* movies, #84 on the list. Dark Horse has

also published numerous *Predator* series, more than 50 comics in all.

10. Superman. The world's greatest super-hero had his origins in the science-fiction books and magazines enjoyed by his creators, Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster. And, even if the science of Superman hasn't held up well over the past 60 years, the sense of wonder is most certainly still there.

Other cartoon, comic-book, and comic-strip creations also made the EW list. *Weird Science*, the E.C. Comics title, came in at #35. The *Flash Gordon* serials (#44) just beat out *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century* (#48). Hanna-Barbera's *The Jetsons* zoomed their way to #52. Katsuhiro Otomo's *Akira* was #58.

The jury is still out on how much television's *Lost in Space* owed to Gold Key's *Space Family Robinson* title, but *LiS* was found at #69. Stan Lee and Jack Kirby's *The Incredible Hulk* was #82, while *Watchmen* by Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons was #98.

Science-fiction movies have often been adapted into comics and sometimes continued as ongoing series. Among the entries that fit this description are *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (#12), *Blade Runner* (#14), *The Time Machine* (#15), *Planet of the Apes* (#17), *The Terminator* (#23), *Godzilla, King of the Monsters* (#28), *Jurassic Park* (#29), *The Thing* (#30), *V* (#40), *Forbidden Planet* (#41), *RoboCop* (#46), *Total Recall* (#56), *Fantastic Voyage* (#61), *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* (#63), *The Abyss* (#66), *Logan's Run* (#70), *X — The Man with X-Ray Eyes* (#75), *Death Race 2000* (#87), *The Adventures of Buckaroo Banzai across the Eighth Dimension* (#89), and *Independence Day* (#100).

Science-fiction novels, television series, and radio programs have all found their way into comic books. The list includes: *The Time Machine* (#15), *The X-Files* (#16), *Outer Limits* (#25), William Gibson's *Neuromancer* (#34), various stories from Ray Bradbury's *The Martian Chronicles* (#43), *From the Earth to the Moon* (#49), *Captain Video and His Video Rangers* (#53), *Things to Come* (#57), *Doctor Who* (#62), *Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde* (#73), *The Invaders* (of the Roy Thinnes and not the Roy Thomas variety) (#81), *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* (#91), *The Six Million Dollar Man* (#94), Harlan Ellison's *A Boy and His Dog* (#96), and *Babylon 5* (#97).

Myst, a science-fiction computer game, also made it onto both the list and into comics. Published by Dark Horse, it ranked #90 on the list.

What surprised me most about these choices was the inclusion of gems that, to the best of my doubtless-imperfect knowledge, *never* made their way into comics. I know I would be interesting in seeing — and maybe even writing — comics versions of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (#13), Isaac Asimov's *I, Robot* (#21), *Fahrenheit 451* (#51), *Them!* (#65), and, production nightmare though it would certainly be, *Mystery Science Theater 3000* (#67).

If you were keeping score, you noted that more than half of the entries on the EW list could claim some connection to the world of comics. I thought that was pretty cool, until I read the Oct. 30 edition of EW.

EW's "Power Issue" listed the 101 most powerful people in the entertainment business. The closest thing to a comics character or creator on the list was, coming in at #101.5, The Grinch (Who Stole Christmas). The Dr. Seuss classic is to become a live-action film with a planned release of Christmas 1999.

Some comics characters were, at least, mentioned in a sidebar to "The Power 101." Several celebrities were asked the question, "If you could have one superpower, what would it be?" Gil Bellows of *Ally McBeal* answered:

"I'd want to be a cross between The Invisible Man and Spider-Man. They have the best powers."

Saturday Night Live's Kevin Nealon also went for invisibility, while Christina Applegate opted for x-ray vision. Alyson Hannigan of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* would choose the power to freeze time, because, "It would be fun to walk around while other people are frozen and see what they're up to. I could see someone with a finger up his nose."

This is why these people need writers. Me, I'd wish for the power to make anything I wished for come true — without even having to talk backward. Which doesn't mean DC's Zatanna the Magician wouldn't figure into this fantasy eventually.

Li't ees uoy txeen keew.

Tony Isabella, along with his co-author Bob Ingersoll, will be signing **Captain America: Liberty's Torch** at Mid-Ohio-Con, Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 28 and 29, at the spiffy Adam's Mark Hotel in downtown Columbus, Ohio. It's their first novel and it's heading toward fine bookstores and comics shops even as we "speak." You can even buy a copy at Mid-Ohio-Con. Just head for The Laughing Ogre booth and tell them Tony and Bob sent you.

You can send your comments on and review items for this column to: Tony's Tips, P.O. Box 1502, Medina, OH 44258.



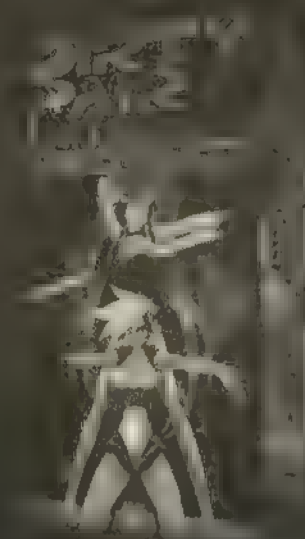
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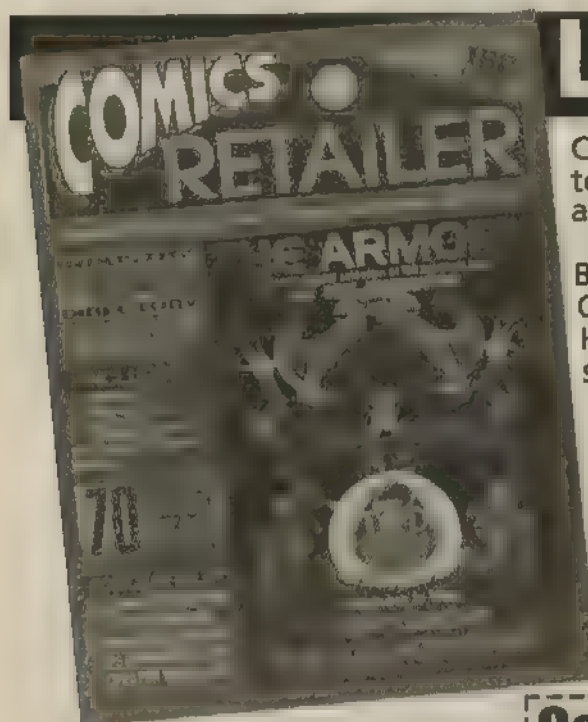
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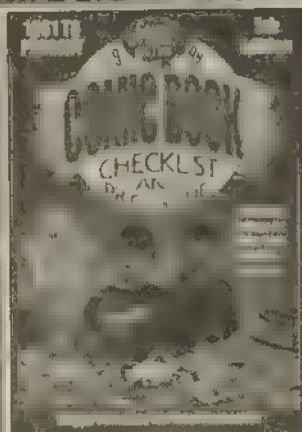
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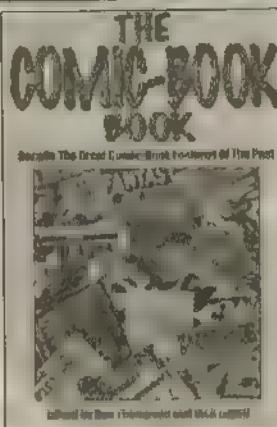
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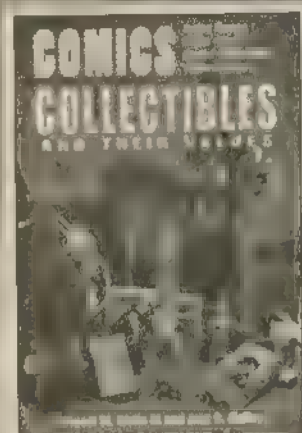
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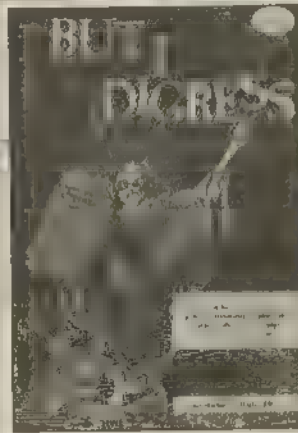
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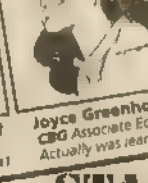
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STAFF EDITION

A round-robin review of some of today's noteworthy comic books!

Son of Rampage

Slap Happy, pages, \$13.95

Slap Happy's second black-and-white anthology contains 20 stories, including contributions from Scott Roberts (*Patty Cake*), John Gallagher (*Buzzboy*), David Yurkovich (*Threshold*), and Chris Yambar (*Fire-Breathing Pope Comics*, pictured). **Reviewed from photocopies. Shipping in December.**



Brent: If you want to turn your friends on to those independent projects you like, this sampler is one of the best ways to do it. "Fire-Breathing Pope" is reminiscent of "Carmen Cru," the star of Renegade's 1980s series *French Ice*. **B+.**

Joyce: While it's highly unlikely that you'd want to add every series sampled in this anthology to your buy list, it's a good bet that you'll find most of the material enjoyable enough to make *Son of Rampage* a good buy. **B+.**

John: If anthologists get tired of hearing their works described as "hit or miss" affairs, there's an easy solution: Leave the "misses" out. (They usually know what they are, anyway.)

That's the downside with a project like *Rampage*. Since it's an outreach effort, there's not a great editorial impulse to weed out the material that's not even ready for a mass audience. Of course, there are a few gems — but you may wonder whether your \$14 might be better spent on any five issues of the titles depicted herein.

But solitary consumption isn't the point here. If you buy it — and buy

into the project's mission — you can't be shy about loaning it out. Retailers might be wise to keep a loaner copy on hand for customers. **C+.**

Maggie: It's labeled "all-ages fun," but some language is stronger than those fine Dell comics of the '40s. It's also relatively in-group — in that a young reader new to the art form would not necessarily be drawn into all the stories. That said, there are some strong entries in the midst of this varied presentation, and some stories have strong, traditional storytelling, while others have skilled art. (And, yes, some entries feature both.) George Broderick's *Courageous Man* story, for example, works well from all angles — complete with a mystery. Some stories don't work (e.g., one with a punch ending about a suicide in which the method would make the purpose unworkable), while others (*Quicken Forbidden*) will lead readers to hunt for other work by the creators. \$14? Sales won't be high. **B-.**

Panel's grade: **B**

Star Wars: Crimson Empire II #1

Dark Horse, color, \$5.99

Dark Horse continues the events set in motion by the first *Crimson Empire* mini-series. Following the death of Carnor Jax, the Empire is led by an Interim Council while the search begins for a new leader amid assassination attempts and increased piracy in the Rebel Alliance. **Reviewed from photocopies. Available in November.**

Maggie: Among the advantages of the Dark Horse *Star Wars* projects is the ease with which the company can generate accessible science-fiction adventure stories. The rules are established, the environment is set, the scientific advances are clear, and creators can put their characters in the setting without having to spend vast chunks of story providing all that information for the readers. The problem the reader faces is, however, that stories which deal extensively with, say, elaborate power struggles and a cast of a dozen or so are hard to follow. This art is good and will look even better in color — but the story is difficult to get into. (It'd be cool to see, say, a two-character adventure on a jungle planet at some point.) **B-.**

Brent: This is an interesting series for lovers of science-fiction intrigue stories and die-hard *Star Wars* fans, but for those looking for a Luke, Han, Chewie, and Leia fix, this mini-series is not going to satisfy. It's kinda like watching a *Star Trek* episode without any of the command crew in evidence. There's still action, but the group dynamics are missing. **C.**

Joyce: The two separate (so far) plotlines shown in the first issue concern vicious political intrigues within the council and vicious underworld plots involving pirates and Lord knows what else. Even the pirates' victim was apparently harboring something nasty. If there are any good guys out there, they'd better show up soon, before readers no longer care what happens to anyone in the series. **C-.**

John: Some of the new Kenner action figures ably demonstrate how desperately Lucasfilm licensees need the new *Star Wars* movies. They're packed with movie slides, as if to prove the figure being represented really did have at least one frame of screen time in the movies — although



not always much more. (One half expects to see "Sound Man with Boom" in the next wave.)

So, another mixed bag here, thanks to Dark Horse's old nemesis. It doesn't have the rights to use the original *Star Wars* characters freely, but stories set in the *Star Wars* universe not involving them have limited appeal to the general public. Longtime Dark Horse *Star Wars*-philes will find the palace intrigue in the remnants of the Imperial ruling bodies interesting. But civilians who might have been interested in *Crimson Empire* for the presence of such familiar characters as Darth Vader and The Emperor will find aggravatingly few access points here — only about a dozen interchangeable new faces with forgettably bizarre names. (You've met one "Xandel Carivus...".) **C+.**



Union Jack #1

Marvel, color, 32 pages, \$2.99

Actor Joey Chapman inherits the title (and Webley pistol) of the World War I hero and finds himself facing a horde of vampires. Former *Invader* Spitfire makes an appearance. **Reviewed from photocopies. Available now.**

John: While it's important to start *in media res*, this issue's opening sequence featuring Union Jack whacking vampires sorely tests the patience. (You think, like, maybe he doesn't like vampires?) Stay with it, however, and you'll hit this series' interesting idea: vampires hunting for the Holy Grail.

It's hoped it won't be the only interesting idea, since the raw materials show potential. *Union Jack* at times recalls the moody style of Moench and Sienkiewicz's *Moon Knight*, and, if the hero is too underwritten yet to be a very engaging protagonist, it'll be interesting to see what he has to say when he's not burning a third of his issue in melee. **B.**

Maggie: This is a terrific starting point for a new Marvel series. With strong art and strong script, it's accessible but also inventively staged. Action scenes are scripted for fast page-turning; background is provided

in quick, effective doses. It's got vampires, intriguing characters, eye-catching art, and a plot beyond the "there are bunches of vampires that need to be killed" usual. So far, it's a compelling story that should bring readers back, eager for #2. Cassaday is going to get hotter and hotter. You read it here. **A.**

Brent: It's good to see more of the ideas Roy Thomas introduced in *The Invaders* coming around again. We know the fates of the main group (Captain America, The Sub-Mariner, and The Human Torch), but what happened to Spitfire and her father? This is great fun, and I hope it will lead to more adventures. Hey, Marvel, how about a return of The Liberty Legion (or their offspring)? **A.**

Joyce: This first issue gives just enough information to leave readers wanting more and raises enough questions to make them eager to see the second issue — especially considering the new twist the creators have



thrown into the old vampire-hunting storyline. Even in black-and-white photocopies, the artwork shows to advantage. In color, it should be excellent. If future installments live up to the potential that this episode has shown (and there's no reason to suppose they won't), *Union Jack* could become a real hit. **A.**

Panel's grade: **A-**

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CHARLTON HEROES: HEROIC BEGINNINGS

OR — PRODUCING 10 POUNDS OF CHICKEN FEATHERS EVERY MONTH

By Marc Patten

In 1952 a promising young artist named Dick Giordano was making his way into the annals of comic-book history. Giordano began freelancing for Charlton around New Year's Day of 1952 for Al Fago, the publishing house's first editor, and was living in New York in the Bronx at the time. In 1955, Charlton's owner decided he wanted all employees working for the company to work on-site in the suburbs of Derby, Conn., and Giordano began a run of 10 years as a staff penciller and inker. From 1959 to 1960 he worked as assistant to then-Executive Editor Pat Masulli. "Pat started there the same time that I did," said Giordano. "He was a colorist at the time. He became the executive editor for the company after Al Fago left to pursue other interests."

Then, Giordano went back to

freelancing. He also kept busy with many outside accounts, including DC (then National Comics), ACG, and Dell. However, in 1965 Giordano's life would change forever, as he entered into the arena of editorial again — only this time, *he* was the man in charge.

"I was all over the place and decided that I wanted something a little bit easier and a little more stable," Giordano said. "They offered me the position of executive editor for the comic-book division, and that's what I did for the next two years." Previously, Masulli had been in charge of all of Charlton's magazines, including its extremely profitable music division. When Charlton's higher-ups decided they needed Masulli to nurture and take more control of the music publications, they created a separate editorial position for the small comic-book division.

Giordano's experience, as Masulli's assistant years before, landed him the job.

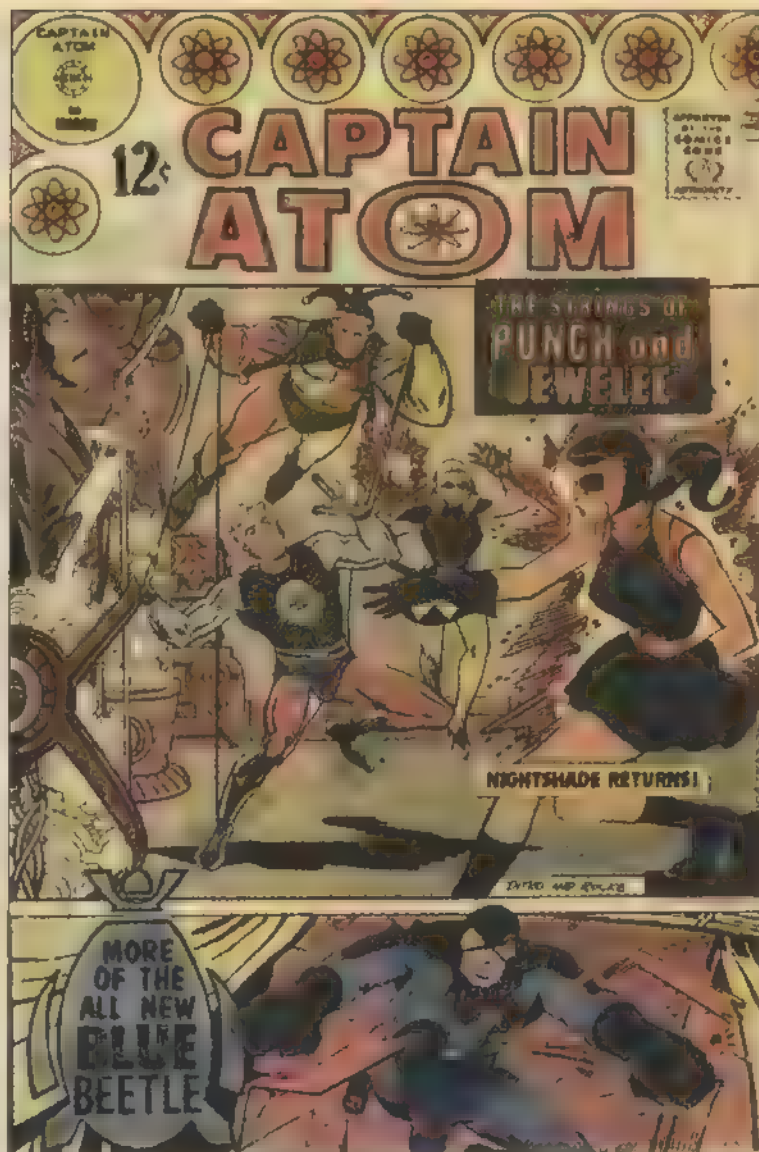
How to create something with nothing. When Giordano took over the fledgling comic line, he said he was presented with more obstacles than he had expected. "I had very little money to work with to pay freelancers. Most of the artwork at the time was being done by the same people I came to Connecticut with." He said that most of the artists still came in and sat at their drawing board for a full day. They would get paid depending on how much they accomplished per week. Such creators as Charlie Nicholas, Rocky Mastrosiero, Vince Alascia, Joe Gill, and Jon D'Agostino sat in the Charlton bullpen and created page after page of material for extremely low rates.

"The comic books were pretty much being painted by the numbers, so to speak, at that time. The assignments were given to the writers, primarily Joe Gill. The scripts were given to the artists on staff like Charlie Nicholas or Rocky Mastrosiero. No one was really checking any of it. The scripts weren't being read, for the most part, and the artwork was rarely looked at. It was just turning out 10 pounds of chicken feathers every month."

It became Giordano's prime responsibility to expand the action-hero line. "We only had a few titles then. A few issues of the old *Blue Beetle* had been published. I think *Son of Vulcan* was still being published, and I believe a version of *Captain Atom* had just been started. There was no real super-hero line, only a few comics here and there. The series that did well were the war comics, the romance comics, and the horror comics. Super-heroes weren't thought of as something that we should get involved in, because Charlton didn't have the resources to do them right."

So where did Giordano find the resources and extra talent to expand the super-hero line? "I did what Pat Masulli and the others before me didn't take the time to do: I just went through the files of everyone who was looking for work. I found people like Jim Aparo and Pat Boyette, who had written in with samples and were just ignored. I contacted these people with the idea of starting seven comic-book titles for a new action-hero line."

Giordano also began titles like *Ghostly Tales* and the music *Go-Go*



All of these Charlton characters made their way to DC with *Punch, Jewelee*, and *Nightshade* joining *The Suicide Squad*, while *Captain Atom* and *The Blue Beetle* were members of the *Justice League* as well as stars of their own series.

comic book. (Early issues were done by Aparo.) "Although my schedule was 34 titles, from the time I started to the time I left, they were all bi-monthly. That meant 17 titles per month, and my staff consisted of my secretary. It doesn't take much of a brain to realize I wasn't going to edit 17 titles a month. I just edited — I mean *truly* edited — the ones that interested me and the ones that I started, like the whole action-hero line. For those titles, I wrote the ads and did all of the cover roughs, with the exception of the Ditko comics."

"I did whatever an editor or an art director needed to do. I redesigned the company logo to the red and white 'C.' Then I started looking around for ways to get more money to pay the people that I wanted to do the work — and came up with a plan that I sold my boss over a period of time."

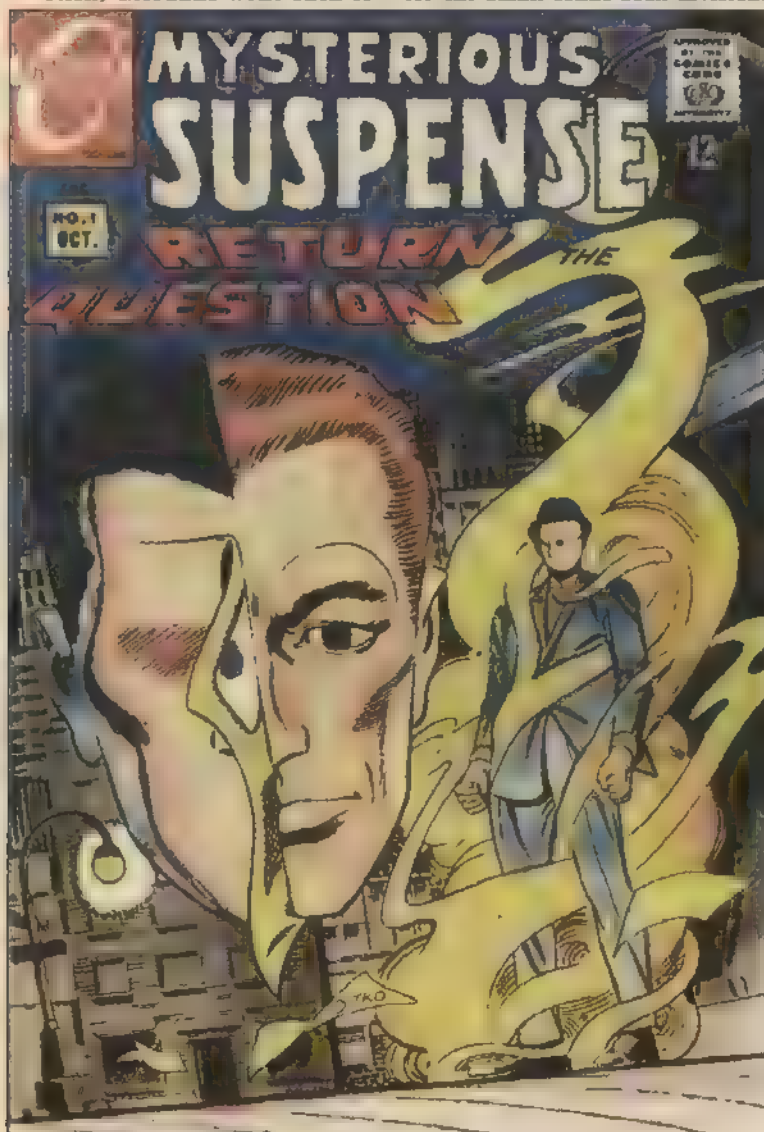
The way Giordano did this was to buy work for the war, romance, and Western comics from creators in South America, where the exchange rate was extremely favorable and he could afford to pay "even less than the poor rates we were already paying," Giordano said. He also reprint-

ed text pages where possible and had staff artists produce covers to save money. "I used the extra funds to pay the Steve Ditkos and Jim Aparos and so on a little bit more for the work that they did."

Giordano said that Charlton was unique in that everything from concept to shipping took place under one roof. "In the history of comics I don't know of anyone who had this kind of set up," he explained. "We did the engraving, color separating, and printing in the same building that we did the editorial, and much of that was my responsibility. So, forgetting editorial for a moment, Charlton was producing comic books at far less than their competitors could afford to do."

"I learned about scheduling, I learned about production, and I learned how to get three titles edited in the time that most people edited one. It really prepared me for what followed [his editorial career at DC]. I've never regretted doing it. My only regret was that Charlton had an opportunity, if they wanted to take a little time and spend a little money, to be a real power in the

(Continues on Page 30)



Steve Ditko drew *The Question* for Charlton.

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CHARLTON

(From Page 28)

to take a little time and spend a little money, to be a real power in the business, and they chose to be junk dealers. That's why I left, really.

"The super-hero line wasn't going anywhere, because there was no promotion, no distribution. Nobody tried to do anything different with them other than throw them out there and see what happened." During that period, it was up to the newsdealer to decide what titles he used to fill his racks, and Charlton had no sales people to push its comics onto the newsstands. "So they didn't sell very well," Giordano added.

Hold the presses. The Charlton super-hero titles were the only comics published in the industry whose letters columns actually contained mail on the previous issue. Giordano had plates made and on press for the color portions for the letter columns. Minutes before the press was set to run, he would write the letters page based on the mail that had just come in, rush it to the typesetter who was also in the building, proofread it on the typesetting machine, get a plate made, and bring the plate to the press to

lay over the color. "On more than one occasion, the press was run at night, so I had to go back after I went home. Sometimes I'd be there at 1 o'clock or 2 o'clock in the morning."

Whose title is it, anyway?

New titles continued their numbering from pre-existing series wherever possible. In those days, titles with higher numbering were perceived as successes, where titles starting at #1 were perceived as untried. (This is why so many #1s were conspicuously left off the covers of many publishers' comics). The other major reason was that in those days second-class mailing privileges were needed to send copies to subscribers, distributors, etc. Titles that already existed had these privileges already, but applying for second-class permits for new titles was costly, and titles had to have several issues published before the permit was granted. *Captain Atom* continued its numbering from *Strange Suspense Stories* and began with Vol. 2, #78, in which the character's origin was retold from his previous appearances in *Space Adventures* #33-#42. In *Captain Atom* #84 the character was reborn with an altered origin and new costume.



Blue Beetle Dan Garrett passed the mantle to his associate Ted Kord, who carried the heroic legend from Charlton to the later DC series.

While no crossovers or guest appearances actually occurred in any of the Charlton hero line, characters often had stories in each other's titles.

Nightshade first appeared in *Captain Atom* #82 and appeared in only three more issues (#87-#89).

The Question first appeared in *Blue Beetle* #1 but remained a backup and never made it into his own series. (Although the character did return in a one-shot title, *Mysterious Suspense*, with a story by Ditko.) Giordano said that, while he always envisioned the Charlton heroes line as a shared universe, it was never formally stated. The company also never got to the point where guest appearances were seriously considered.

The Fightin' Five took the title from *Space War* with the second volume's #28 (their first appearance).

The Peacemaker made his first appearance in *The Fightin' Five* #40 before going on his own. *Peacemaker* #1 became the line's first official #1, (*Sarge Steel* which also started fresh, launched prior to Giordano's stint as editor.)

Judomaster first appeared in *Special War Series* #4 and then *Sarge Steel* before claiming the *Gun Master* title with issue #89.

Blue Beetle first appeared in *Captain Atom* #83 and lasted three issues before moving into his own series. Blue Beetle became the second exception to began its short run with an inaugural number.

Thunderbolt (Peter Cannon) went the reverse route. He first appeared in *Thunderbolt* #1, and two months later he took over the *Son of Vulcan* title with issue #51.

The magic of creation. While Giordano oversaw the action hero line, he played less of a role in its creative genesis than either Stan Lee or Julie Schwartz did for their respective companies. "My role as an editor was always more noodling than giving hard-core direction," he said. According to Giordano, the new Blue Beetle, The Question, and

Nightshade were all created by Steve Ditko. The original version of Captain Atom was created and written by Dave Kaler, but the later re-vamping was written by Ditko under a pen name. "All of the material that Steve drew, he also wrote. He was credited as D. Glanzman or something like that." Apparently, D. Glanzman was someone who worked on the Charlton staff and liked to see his name in print, but he never actually wrote anything. "Ditko always seemed to have a handle on what he was doing," Giordano continued. "He created The Blue Beetle without ever having discussed it with me. He created the character and his costume, the bug, and the gun that only emitted light, and came in with it pretty much fully realized. All there was left to do was figure out what to do for a first issue, which he gave me a rough version of."

"At that point he was already doing some Spider-Man stuff for Stan Lee, and he knew about co-plotting from that. For subsequent issues, he would give me an idea of what the next issue was going to be about, and the next time I saw the material, it was finished. For the script, he would storyboard it with little pictures and the lettering written in. He would take that, go home, and do finished artwork, pencils and inks, bring it back, and we'd refine the dialogue. Some times, we'd just send it to the letterer as is."

The Peacemaker and Fightin' Five were both created and written by Joe Gill, who wrote most, if not all, of the issues, according to Giordano. Art for those two series was split between Pat Boyette and Bill Montez, both friends of his at the time.

Judomaster was written and partially drawn by Frank McLaughlin. "It started out as a newspaper strip that Frank was trying to sell, and he wasn't getting anywhere with it. It sounded like a good idea for us, so we did it. He wrote, lettered, and inked all of the issues

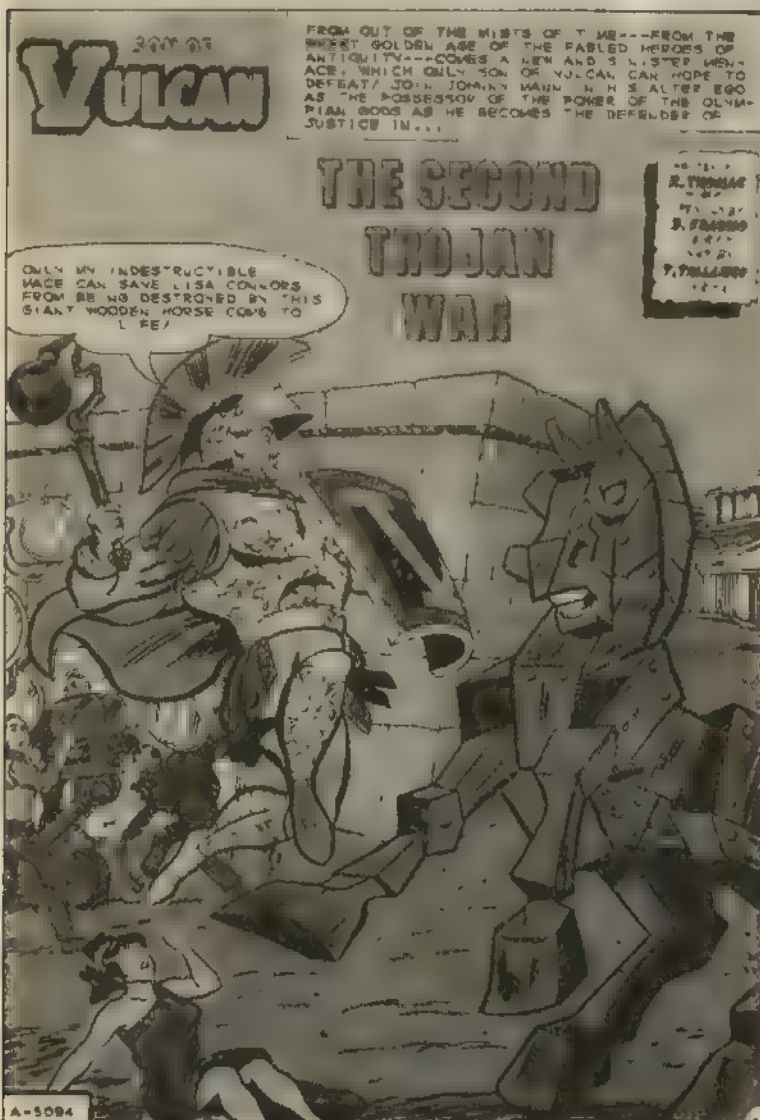
and drew some of them. I laid out the rest of them for him." Giordano also co-plotted all the *Judomaster* issues with McLaughlin. "We both worked on staff at that time. We used to go down to the bank on Fridays to cash our pay checks, and we would either plot a new issue of *Judomaster* or refine a plot we came up with the previous week."

Sarge Steel was initially created by Pat Masulli, who wrote the first issue. Subsequent issues were written by Joe Gill, while Giordano himself supplied the artwork for all eight issues of the series before it was transformed into a secret agent title (called *Secret Agent*) following Giordano's departure.

Thunderbolt was created by a police officer named Pete Morisi (originally credited as "Pam"). Police officers in New York City, where he worked, were forbidden at that time to have any other source of income. Morisi created the whole character, presented it to Giordano, and also wrote and drew most of the series. "It eventually became a problem where Pete was so in love with the creation that he couldn't bear to sit down and work on it," said Giordano. "He used to labor over every word and every drawing. I basically had to hold his hand and motivate him to get to the next part of the story. I only gave him help on the storyline when he requested it."

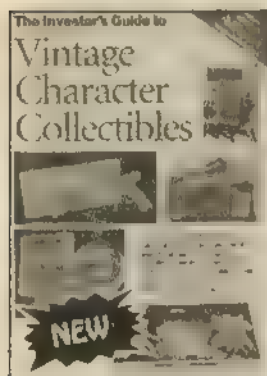
Most of the Charlton action-hero titles ran less than 10 issues during Giordano's two-year reign. When he left the company for DC, the line he spearheaded faded away. Although the titles had had print runs of more than 200,000 copies each, sales only averaged 40,000 to 50,000 copies per issue, which in those days was extremely poor. Each month a title or two was canceled, with no one at the company sharing Giordano's fondness for the characters.

Final stories for *Captain Atom* #90 appeared in *Charlton Bullseye* in the mid-1970s. The characters made occasional appearances in the early 1980s before DC bought them.



Prolific comics writer Roy Thomas' first comics story was this *Son of Vulcan* episode.

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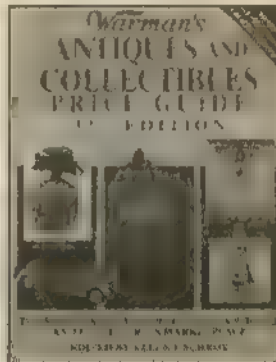
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by Oscar Garcia
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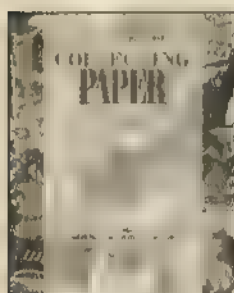


1999 Toys & Prices 5th Edition
by Edited by Sharon Korbeck
The newest edition of the toy hobby's bible covers more than 18 categories of toys with detailed information and pricing in several grades of condition. New toy categories have been added bringing this edition to more than 19,000 toys dating from 1843 to 1997. As an added bonus, a toy manufacturers directory and an auction house list are included. Toys featured are Beanie Babies, Stars Wars, model kits, western toys, cast-iron vehicles and banks, tin toys, games, lunch boxes, character toys, Fisher-Price®, restaurant premi-

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SUN, NOV 15

Born on this date

Heidi D. MacDonald
Stu Schwartzberg
Martin Nodell (1915)
Michael Gallagher (1951)
Mike Gustovich (1953) 45 years ago
George Broderick Jr (1957)

MON, NOV 16

Born on this date

Richard Howell
Joe Judi

TUES, NOV 17

CBG #1307 ships — Fatal Females issue, with features on David Mack's Kabuki and more. Plus the CBG Price Guide, and our reader panel looks at comics coming in January.

Born on this date

Sue Flaxman
Vincent (1940) (1960)
Sue (1969)

WED, NOV 18

70 years ago: Mickey Mouse first appears in Steamboat Willie, the first sound-synchronized cartoon (1928). Today is also the "birthday" of Minnie Mouse.

Born on this date

Alan Moore (1952)

THURS, NOV 19

Born on this date

Rick McCollum (1954)
Steve Lightle (1959)

FRI, NOV 20

Born on this date

Chester Gould (1900)
Dave Schreiner (1946)
Rian Hughes (1963) 35 years ago
Guy Davis (1966)
David Galzmer (1966)
Jill Thompson (1966)
Stephanie Gladden (1969)

SAT, NOV 21

ComicFreek '98 begins in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. See Calendar Notes.

Born on this date

Vincent DiFate (1945)
Larry Welz (1948) 50 years ago
Greg Theakston (1953) 45 years ago
Dennis Laborda (1955)

CBG Calendar Notes

Shows listed are multiple-day, non-mall-show events with the primary focus on comic books. Further information about these and other shows, as well as creator appearances, can be found each week in the CBG features What, Where, and When and Now Appearing.

• **ComicFreek '98** Nov. 21 and 22 at the Toronto International Centre, Hall 6, 6900 Airport Road at Derry Toronto Ontario Canada. Guests include Murphy Anderson, Joe Jusko, Drew Hayes, Tim Vigil and Karl Alstaefer. Hours: Saturday 11 a.m.-7 p.m.; Sunday 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Admission: \$8/one day, \$12/two days. Children under 8 are admitted free when accompanied by an adult.

Continuing This Week

• **American Dream Gallery**, 72 Walcott St., Bath, United Kingdom. Info: David Currie at 01225 424881. Current exhibit: 60 Years of Superman exhibit.

through Nov. 30. A retrospective of the career of the world's first super-hero. Includes personal folio art by industry professionals exhibited for the first time.

• **Cartoon Art Museum**, 814 Mission St., San Francisco, CA. Call for updates on current exhibits (415) CAR-TOON.

• **The Genius of Winsor McCay** through Dec. 30 at the Ohio State University Cartoon Research Library Reading Room Gallery, 27 West 17th Ave. Mall Columbus, OH.

• **Humor in a Jugular Vein, An Expanded Exhibition of the Art, Artists, and Artifacts of Mad Magazine** through Nov. 21 at the Columbus College of Art and Design's Joseph V. Canzani Center, 60 Cleveland Ave., Columbus, OH. Items on display are from the collection of Mark J. Cohen and Rose Marie McDaniel.

• **International Museum of Cartoon Art**, 201 Plaza Real, Boca Raton, FL 33432. Call for updates on current exhibits (561) 391-2200. Current exhibit: A Holiday Cartoon Celebration through Jan. 17. Holiday-themed cartoons and comics, including works by Carl Barks, Milton Caniff, Will Eisner, Chuck Jones,

Walt Kelly, Thomas Nast, and Mort Walker.

• **Words & Pictures Museum**, 140 Main St., Northampton, MA. Call for updates on current exhibits (413) 586-8545. Current exhibits: **Creepy & Eerie** with Richard Corben exhibit through January 1999 at the Words & Pictures Museum, in Northampton, Mass. Curated in collaboration with Heavy Metal magazine, this exhibit features a wide variety of Corben's work including paintings which mix oils, acrylics, airbrush, and markers. The exhibit is not intended for children. **Marvel Knights** exhibit of super-hero art by Marvel and Event artists, including Joe Jusko, Jae Lee, Jimmy Palmiotti, Joe Quesada, Mark Texeira, and Bernie Wnguson, through January 1999. The exhibit will showcase work from each of the four Marvel Knights titles: *Black Panther*, *Daredevil*, *Inhumans*, and *Punisher*, including covers, interior work, and scripts, as well as such Event comics as *Ash* and *Painkiller Jane*. **Spotlight on Gary Gianni and Robert E. Howard's Solomon Kane**, through Dec. 14. The exhibit features Gianni's illustrations for *Wandering Star's* hardcover edition of Howard's *The Savage Tales of Solomon Kane*. Gianni will be at the museum Saturday, Nov. 21, for a signing.

New comics scheduled to ship this week

The following information is taken from publisher and distributor solicitations and updates and is as accurate as possible at press time. Check with your local retailer to find out what day new comics go on the shelves. Comics that are delayed or rescheduled will be tracked in future CBG Calendars.

Note: * indicates a rescheduled comic book that appeared in a previous CBG Calendar.

Antarctic Press

• **Luftwaffe** 1946 #13, \$2.95 (Aug)

Archie Comic Publications

Archie & Friends #33, \$1.75
Betty & Veronica #132, \$1.75
Cheryl Blossom #19, \$1.75
Holiday Fun Digest #3, \$1.95
Pals 'n' Gals Double Digest #38, \$2.95

Calliber

• **Little White Mouse: The Series** #1, \$2.95 (Aug)

• **Sudden Gravity** #3, \$2.95 (Aug)

Chaos! Comics

Lady Death #11, \$2.95
Purgatory #3, \$2.95

Dark Horse Comics

Black Magic TPB, \$16.95
Dark Horse Classics: Terror of Godzilla #4, \$2.95
Ghost Vol. 2 #3, \$2.95
Grendel: Black, White, and Red #1 (of 4), \$3.95
Gunsmith Cats: Bad Trip #6 (of 6), \$2.95
Kelley Jones: The Hammer TPB, \$12.95
Star Wars: Jedi Academy: Leviathan #2 (of 4), \$2.95
Starship Troopers: Dominant Species #4 (of 4), \$2.95
Subhuman #1 (of 4), \$2.95
Usagi Yojimbo #25, \$2.95

DC Comics

All Star Comics Archives Vol. 4 HC, \$49.95
Aquaman #51, \$1.99
Arsenal #4 (of 4), \$2.50
Batman Chronicles #15, \$2.95
Batman: Crimson Mist HC, \$24.95
Cartoon Network Presents #17, \$1.99
Chronos #10, \$2.50

Detective Comics #728, \$1.99

Dreaming #32, \$2.50

Heart Throbs #1 (of 4), \$2.95

HLA: Strength in Numbers, \$12.95

Il Avillans #2 (of 3), \$2.95

Lobo #58, \$2.50

Sandman Mystery Theatre #69, \$2.50

Starman 80 Page Giant #1, \$4.95

Superboy #58, \$1.99

Superman #141, \$1.99

• **Superman: Doomsday Wars** #2 (of 3), \$4.95 (Oct. 18-24); #3 (of 3), \$4.95

Vertigo: Winter's Edge II, \$6.95

Young Justice Secret Files #1, \$4.95

Image Comics

Divine Right: Collected Ed. #2, \$5.95

Kitchen Sink Press

Crow: The Author's Ed. HC, \$34.95

Marvel Comics

A-Next #4, \$1.99

Captain America #13, \$1.99

Essential Avengers Vol. 1, \$14.95

Heroes for Hire #19, \$1.99

Incredible Hulk #472, \$1.99

Peter Parker: Spider-Man #1, \$2.99

Punisher #3 (of 4), \$2.99

Thunderbolts #22, \$1.99

Uncanny X-Men #364, \$1.99

Union Jack #2 (of 3), \$2.99

X-Men #47, \$1.99

X-Men #83, \$1.99

X-Men: The Munga #20, \$2.99

Oni Press

Geshu #3 (of 4), \$2.95

Sirius Entertainment

• **Wandering Star** Vol. 2 TPB, \$14.95 (Sep)

Viz Communications

America Extra Vol. 1 #2, \$4.95

Dragonball Z #9 (of 9), \$2.95

Eat Man Vol. 2 Second Course, \$15.95

Maison Ikkoku Part Eight #4 (of 8), \$3.50

Nightwarriors: Darkstalkers Revenge #1 (of 6), \$2.95

Pokémon: The Electric Tale of Pikachu #1 (of 4), \$3.25

*Return of Lum*Urusei Yatsura* Vol. 8, Ran

Attacks!, \$15.95

Shipping notes and updates

• **Confirmed shipping:** We have received confirmation that the following titles have shipped and should be available in stores. This reflects shipping information received through Oct. 30.

A List: *Jungle Comics* #5, \$2.95 (Jul)

Scream Comics #1, \$2.95 (Jul)

ABC: *Double Impact: Bkhu Special* #1, \$3 (2 nude eds., \$6) (Sep)

Double Impact: One Step Beyond #1 (of 2), \$3 (nude ed., \$6) (Sep)

Double Impact: Raw Vol. 2 #1 (of 3), \$3 (2 nude eds., \$6) (Sep)

AC: *Best of the West* #3, \$4.95 (Sep)

Antarctic: *Luftwaffe* 1946 #12, \$2.95 (Jul)

Robotech #10, \$2.95 (Sep)

Blatant: *Xxxena vs. Busty* #1, \$2.95 (nude ed., \$9.95) (Jul)

Eddie Campbell: *Eddie Campbell's Bacchus* #38, \$2.95 (Sep)

Egmont Fleetway: *2000 A.D.* #1113, \$2.95 (Sep)

Fantagraphics: *Bluch in Heat* #6, \$2.95 (Sep)

Hardcore Dard, \$4.95 (Jun)

Image: *A Distant Soil: The Ascendant*, \$18.95 (Jul)

Knight Watchman #3, \$2.95 (Jul)

Lone Star: *Pantheon* #3 (of 12), \$2.95 (Sep 13-19)

Solson: *How to Draw Super Heroes*, \$19.95 (Sep)

• **Nov. 1-7:** The following items have been added to publishers' shipping schedules for this week in addition to those items listed in previous CBG Calendars.

American Mule: *True Adventures of Adam & Bryon* #4, \$2.50 (Oct)

Awesome: *Fighting American: Dogs of War* #3, \$2.50 (Nov)

Bongo: *Simpsons Comics* #39, \$2.25 (Oct)

Cartoon Books: *Bone* #34, \$2.95 (Sep)

Drawn & Quarterly: *Just the Facts* TPB, \$11.95 (Sep)

Little Man TPB, \$16.95 (Sep)

Sleepwalk and Other Stories TPB, \$10.95 (Oct 11-17)

Helikon: *Galaxion* Vol. 1, \$15.95 (Nov)

Image: *Ascension* #10, \$2.50 (Sep)

Automaton #2 (of 3), \$2.95 (Oct)

Desperate Times #3, \$2.95 (Nov)

Espers #8, \$2.95 (Sep)

Resident Evil #3, \$4.95 (Sep)

Savage Dragon Archives #2 (of 4), \$2.95 (Oct)

Spawn #77, \$1.95 (Aug)

Cancellations

The following items have been announced as canceled or postponed. If a publisher resolicits for any of these items, they will be listed again in the CBG Calendar.

A List: *George Bridgman: Life Drawing* #3-5 (of 5) (Aug-Oct)

ABC: *Wild Things* #1 (of 2) (Aug)

Absolute Blue: *True XXX-Rated Blue* #2 (Aug)

ACG: *Celestine: Mistress of the Sword* #1 (Oct)

Atx C.C.: *Shadow Reigns: Interregnum* #4 (Aug)

Amaze Ink/Slave Labor: *Wretch* #7 (Jun)

Angel: *Girl on Girl: Back to Back* #1 (Aug)

Vampire Girls: California 1969 TPB (Aug)

Antarctic: *Hepeats* #13 (Jul)

Awesome: *Coven* #7-9 (Apr-Jun)

Fighting American: Cold War #1 (Apr)

Fighting American: Collected Ed. #1 (Jun)

Menace #2, #3 (May, Jun)

Supreme TPB (Jun)

Black Out: *Haru Kari Manga to Die for* #1 (Sep)

Haru Kari Manga: Running from Poison #1 (Nov)

Lady Vampire: Immortal No More #0 (Oct)

Lady Vampire: Returns #1 (Aug)

Boneyard: *Babylon Crush: Buddha* (Aug)

Babylon Crush: Girlfriends (Jun)

Bongo: *Roswell* #6 (May), rescheduled for January

BV: *Lurid Tales* #2 (Aug)

Calliber: *Almanac of the Weird* (Sep)

Crime Chronicles: Jack the Ripper #1 (Jun)

Detective #2, #3 (Aug, Oct)

Hanged Man TPB (Jul)

Legendare: In Misery's Shadow TPB (Jun)

Metropolis #1, #2 (Jul, Sep)

Pendragon Chronicles: Advent of Merlin (Aug)

Pendragon Chronicles: Enchanted Lady (Oct)

Pendragon Chronicles: Excalibur (Jun)

Rhinegold: Siegfried (Sep)

Rhinegold: Twilight of the Gods (Oct)

Untouchables: High Society Killer #1 (Jun)

Untouchables: New Beginning HC (Aug)

Chaos: *Dead King Burnt* TPB (Oct)

Omen TPB (Oct 25-31)

Coppervale: *Starchild: Mythopolis* #6 (of 14) (Aug)

CPM: *Chirality Gallery: Charity Pin-Up Book* (Aug), rescheduled for January

Crusade: *Shi: Heaven & Earth* TPB (Jun)

Davdez: *Dark Island* #4 (Aug)

Lost Heroes #5 (Aug)

Fantaco: *Revenge of the Amazing Colossal Amazon Woman* Comic Album (Aug)

Fantagraphics: *Your Flesh* #40 (Aug)

Image: *Kurt Busiek's Astro City* Vol. 2 #16, #17 (Jun, Aug), #16 rescheduled for January

I Ron: *Barbarous* #4 (Aug)

London Night: *Morbid Angel: Desperate* (Aug)

Angels #0 (Aug)

Mammoth: *Tiger Wrath* #2, #3 (of 4) (Aug, Oct)

Marvel: *Blade* #4 (of 6) (Nov)

Marvel Adventures #20 (Sep. 6-12)

Millennium: *Lovely Prudence Swimsuit Special* (Aug)

Olsen: *Dick Danger* #4, #5 (Aug, Sep)

Realm: *Battlestar Galactica: New Beginnings* TPB (Aug)

Shadow House: *Shadow House* #7 (Aug)

Sinus: *Enchanted: The Awakening* #2 (Sep)

Solson: *Book of Shadows* (Aug)

Top Shelf: *Clock* #4 (of 4) (Aug)

TV: *Monsters Classics* #0 (Aug)

Verotile: *Akuma-She* TPB (Aug)

Vision: *Hard Core* #2 (Aug)

Whisper of Wings (Aug)

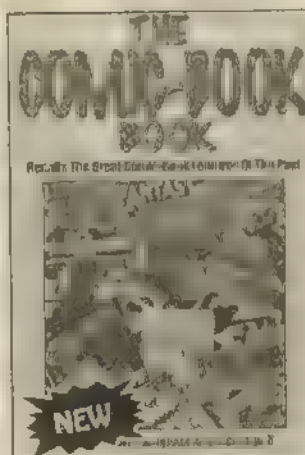
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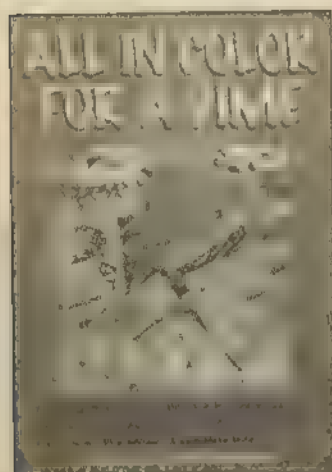
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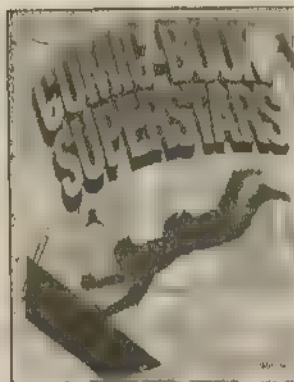
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105 Fine +	18	357 357 Fine +	10	101 105 118 Fine	9	4 VF +	53	142 VF	56						
105 VG	10	358 VF	19	102 105 118 Fine	12	5 VF	185	143 VG	17						
325 Fine	7			108 115 118 VG	12	6 9 VF	29	172 180 VG	18						
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7 VF +	50	372-383 VF	15	58 59 VF	16	10 11 Fine	15	46 VG +	36						
7 VG	12	387 VG +	8	66 69 Fine +	8	SANDMAN - 1974	47	48 VG +	23						
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1 12 Fine	15	397 404 407 408	5	80 Pg. Giant 13 VG	16	1 NM	16	52 57 VG	18						
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6 VF +	54			12 VF stain	65	4 6 NM	7	84 94 NM	32						
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16 18 VF +	26	500 526 NM	9	27 30 VF staple pull	13										
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29 Fine	33	86 (1) N.C. miss c.	3	152 153 VF +	30										
31 32 VF	18			154 155 NM	25										
33-37 NM	30	89 N.C.	4	156 168 Fine +	13										
36 VF	24	90-97 VG	9	166 171 173 24	4										
40 NM	24	98 Good	4	176 179 NM	40										
42 VF	15	101 110 Fine	6	180 Pg. Giant 4 VG +	23										
44 Fine +	7	112 120 VF	30												
		21 VF	30												
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243 245 VG	8	64 NM	55												
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4 4 VG	39														
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NOTE: Incorrect admission prices for Mid-Ohio-Con were run in issues #1303 and #1304. According to show promoter Roger Price the correct prices are \$12 for one day and \$20 for both days of the show, which runs Nov. 28 and 29 in Columbus, Ohio.

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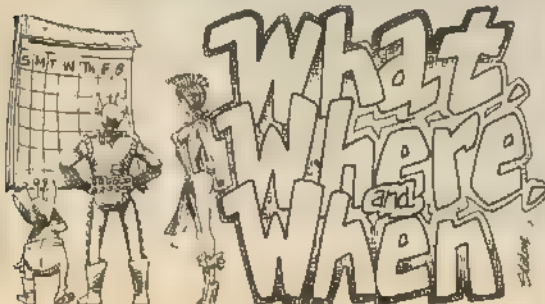
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Gabriels School, Tudor Rd. Exit 34 off I-95 take R., SH 9:30am-3:30pm, T 50, F \$50 for 1 \$80 for 2, \$125 for 3. A. free. Mrs. Aurelia V. Weeks, PO Box 5078, Millford, CT 06460 PH: 203-874-3545 or FAX 203-876-8427

Nov 28-29 CT, East Hartford. Comic Book Toy & Collectibles Show. Pratt & Whitney Aircraft Club, Exit 58 I-84, Roberts St. & Silver Ln. SH 9am-3pm, T 100, A. 99¢. Natalie Terranova, PH 860-519-8355

Nov 29 CT, East Hartford. Comic Book Convention, Elks Hall, 148 Roberts St. (Exit 68 off of I-84), SH 11am-5pm, T 92 F \$40 A \$99 The Bookie, Hal Kinney 206 Burnside Ave., E. Hartford, CT 06108 PH 860-289-1208 afternoons

Dec 6 CT, Stratford. CT's Premier Comic Book & Sports Card Show. Ramada Inn, Exit 30 off I-95 SH 9:30am-3:30pm, T 60-8, F \$75 for 1, \$125 for 2, A. \$3, 99¢ children. Mike Riccio, 155 Lighthouse Ave., Stratford, CT 06497 PH 203-377-9567

Dec 6 CT, East Hartford. Comic Book Toy & Collectibles Show, Pratt & Whitney Aircraft Club, Exit 58 I-84, Roberts St. & Silver Ln., SH 9am-3pm, T 100, A. 99¢. Natalie Terranova, PH 860-519-8355

FLORIDA

Nov 14 FL, Ft. Lauderdale. South Florida Antique & Collectible Toy Super Show, Elks Exhibition Ctr., 700 NE 10th St., SH 10am-5pm, T 160-8, A. \$6. Mark Leimberger, PH 561-694-7982 or Jon Jacobus, PH 954-772-1420

Nov 14 FL, Ft. Lauderdale. Comic Book, Sports Card, Beanie Babies & Memorabilia Show, Coral Ridge Mall, 3200 N. Federal Hwy., SH 10am-6pm, T 8, F \$75, A. free. Ron Tannebaum, PH 954-916-3834

Nov 14 FL, Tallahassee. Comic Book, Sports Card & Toys Show. Marzuq Shrine Temple, 1805 N. Monroe St., SH 9am-4pm, T 27, F \$38 for 1st, \$27 for 2nd, A. free. Charlie Watson, 902 McGuire Ct., Tallahassee, FL 32303 PH 850-386-5657

Nov 15 FL, Tampa. MEGA-SHOW Comic Book & Toy Show, Best Western Hotel Resort, 820 E. Busch Blvd. (I-275, Exit 33), SH 10am-5pm, T 50-6, F \$75, A. \$4.50. Quantum Cat Entertainment, PO Box 3120, Winter Park, FL 32790 PH 407-599-0905

Nov 21-22 FL, Orlando. Comic Book, Toy & Sports Card Show. Colonial High School Junior Cafeteria, 6100 Oleanor, Sat. 10am-8pm, Sun. 10am-6pm, T 160. George Smith, 16116 Hillside Cir., Montverde, FL 34756 PH 407-469-3759

Nov 21 FL, Orlando. Comic Books, Toys, Beanie Babies Collectible Show. Holiday Inn, 7900 S. Orange Blossom Trl., SH 10am-6pm, F \$33, A. \$4. Dale Burkhardt, 8130 Iced Dr., Orlando, FL 32822 PH 407-658-6768 home or 229-5752

GEORGIA

Nov 21-22 GA, Kennesaw. All Stars Comic Book, Sports Cards & Collectibles Show. Kinder's Outlet Mall, 3333 George Busbee Pk., I-75 & Chastain Rd. (Exit 117), SH Sat. 10am-6pm, Sun. 11am-5pm, T 50-8, F \$80, A. free. Jon White, 201 Thornwood Dr., Acworth, GA 30102 PH 770-924-3491 home or 428-4980 Show Center

Nov 21 GA, Augusta. Augustan 28, Comic Books, Toys, Games & Videos Show. Holiday Inn West, I-20 & Washington Rd., SH 10am-6pm, T 30-6, F \$75 for 1 \$200 for 3, A. \$3. Paul Rogers, 1831 Gordon Hwy., Augusta, GA 30906 PH 706-793-7796

Dec 6-6 GA, Kennesaw. All Stars Comic Book, Sports Cards & Collectibles Show. Kinder's Outlet Mall, 3333 George Busbee Pk., I-75 & Chastain Rd. (Exit 117), SH Sat. 10am-6pm, Sun. 11am-5pm, T 50-8, F \$80, A. free. Jon White, 201 Thornwood Dr., Acworth, GA 30102 PH 770-924-3491 home or 428-4980 Show Center

ILLINOIS

Nov 14 IL, Orland Park. Comic Book, Sports Card, Beanie Babies & Toy Show, Civic Ctr 1 blk. W. of LaGrange Rd. (Rt. 45) at 147th St., SH 9am-3pm, T 85-6, F \$30 A. \$1 John Leary, 9522 W. Shore Dr. Oak Lawn, IL 60453 PH 708-423-1758

Nov 15 IL, Peoria. Comiccon, Signature Inn, 4112 Brandywine Dr., I-74, Exit 89 War Memorial, SH 10am-4pm, T 19, F \$25 for 1 \$45 for 2, A. free. Alan Morton, PH 309-657-1599 or Kevin, PH 217-435-9625

Nov 22 IL, Orland Park. Comic Book, Sports Card, Beanie Babies & Toy Show Civic Ctr. 1 blk. W. of LaGrange Rd. (Rt. 45) at 147th St., SH 9am-

3pm T 85-6, F \$30, A. \$1 John Leary, 9522 W. Shore Dr., Oak Lawn, IL 60453 PH 708-423-1758

Dec 6 IL, Oak Lawn. Comic Book, Sports Card, Beanie Babies & Toy Show. Fatima K of C, 5830 W. 95th St., SH 9am-3pm, T 40-8, F \$25, A. \$1 John Leary, 9522 W. Shore Dr., Oak Lawn, IL 60453 PH 708-423-1758

Dec 6 IL, Springfield. ComicCon, Jaycee Activity Centre, 2525 S. 12th St. near the Bunn Park Golf Course, SH 10am-4pm, T 18, F \$25 for 1 \$45 for 2, A. free. Alan Morton, PH: 309-657-1599 or Kevin, PH 217-435-9625

INDIANA

Nov 14-15 IN, Logansport. Multi-Hobby Collectibles Show, Mall, US 24 E. SH Sat. 10am-9pm, Sun. 11am-5pm, T 50-60, F \$65, A. free. Gene Habersich, PO Box 908, Goshen, IN 46527 PH 219-533-1887 10am-midnight

Nov 21-22 IN, South Bend. Multi-Hobby Collectibles Show, Breadwood Center, Hall A, 3900 Lincolnway W. (US 20) 1 mi. E. of Airport, SH Sat. 10am-6pm, Sun. 11am-5pm, T 100, F \$60 for 1 \$100 for 2, A. free. Gene F. Habersich, PO Box 908, Goshen, IN 46527 PH 219-533-1887 10am-midnight

Nov 22 IN, Indianapolis. Comic Book, Sports, Non-Sports, Die Cast Racing Cars & Collectibles Show, Holiday Inn East, 6990 E. 21st St., SH 9am-4pm, T 45, F \$30 for 1, \$45 for 2, A. free. Mark Lopez, PH: 317-894-1115

Nov 22 IN, Elkhart. Comiccon, Weston Plaza, Corner of Cassopolis & CR 6, SH 10am-5pm, T 35-6, F \$50 for 1, \$40 ea. for 2 or more. Hall of Heroes, Allen Stewart, 22818 Elm Dr. Elkhart, IN 46516 PH 219-293-0755

Nov 27 IN, Highland. Comic Book & Sports Card Show, Lincoln Center 2450 Lincoln St., from I-84 S. on Indianapolis Blvd., 4th traffic light turn L., SH 6pm-9:30pm, T 18-6, F \$15 for 2, A. free. Beth Gagliardi, 2450 Lincoln St., Highland, IN 46322 PH: 219-838-0114 8am-10pm

Nov 28 IN, Hammond. Multi-Hobby Collectibles Show, F.O.P. #51 7527

Kennedy Ave. SH 10am-5pm, T 28, A. free. Gene Habersich, PO Box 908, Goshen, IN 46527 PH: 219-533-1887 10am-midnight

Nov 28-29 IN, Goshen. Multi-Hobby Collectibles Show, Inn, 1375 Lincolnway (US 20), SH Sat. 10am-6pm, Sun. 11am-5pm, T 30, F \$40 A. free. Gene Habersich, PO Box 908, Goshen, IN 46527 PH 219-533-1887 10am-midnight

Dec 5-6 IN, South Bend. Multi-Hobby Collectibles Show, Brentwood Center, 3900 Lincolnway West, SH Sat. 10am-6pm, Sun. 11am-5pm, T 100, F \$60 for 1 \$100 for 2, A. free. Gene F. Habersich, PO Box 908, Goshen, IN 46527 PH: 219-533-1887

IOWA

Nov 27-29 IA, Oskaloosa. Comic Book, Sports Cards & Toy Show, Penn Centre Mall, Hwy. 92 W. T 45-8, Stacey Craig, PH: 515-673-4087

KENTUCKY

Nov 15 KY, Lexington. Comic Book & Toy Show, Holiday Inn South I-75, Exit 104, SH 10am-4pm, T 6, F \$40 for 1 \$35 ea. for 2 or more, A. \$2, 12 & under free. Brian, PH: 513-522-1231

Dec 6 KY, Ft. Mitchell. Northern Kentucky, Comic Book Toy & Collectible Show, Drawbridge, nr. I-75, Exit 185 (Buttermilk Pike), SH 10am-4pm, T 6, F \$40 for 1 \$35 ea. for 2 or more, A. \$2, 12 & under free. Brian, PH: 513-522-1231 or Kevin, PH 800-581-9097

LOUISIANA

Nov 14 LA, Metairie. Comic Book, Toys, Non-Sports Cards & Collectibles Show, Holiday Inn, 3400 I-10 Service Rd., Exit 228 Causeway S., SH 10am-5pm, T 35-6, F \$40, in advance, \$45, A. \$2. Kevin Frazier, 308 Shiloh Rd #33 Brandon MS 39042 PH 601-825-1699

Dec 6 LA, Baton Rouge. Comic Book, Sports Card & Beanie Baby Show, Holiday Inn South, I-12 & Airline Hwy., SH 10am-5pm, T 49, F \$45-\$55, A. \$1.50 C&C Promotions, 3068 Monterey Blvd., Baton Rouge, LA 70814 PH: 504-823-2349 or 775-9846

(Continues on Page 50)

'Absolute magic': Waid and Robinson restore JLA-JSA crossovers

By Scott Brick

Living in the '90s, it's easy for us to become jaded. We're constantly barraged with claims, not merely of superiority, but of transcendence. The words "best ever" are applied to nearly every consumer product known to man and blathered about to the point of meaninglessness. We, the disenfranchised, stopped paying attention years ago.

Yet in the '60s and '70s, times were simpler and the words "truth in advertising" actually meant something to some readers. Which is why, when the cover of the 10th annual Justice League-Justice Society crossover in *Justice League of America* #100 carried the declaration, "The greatest gathering of super-stars ever recorded," fans took DC at its word and bought the issue. And discovered that, joy of joys, DC was telling the truth.

Thirty-three super-stars, the heroes of three legendary teams spread across two worlds that no

longer exist, banded together to discover the identity of a fallen comrade whose grave sat shrouded in mystery, his sacrifice long since forgotten. Most lived, one died. It was comic-book Nirvana.

Arguably the best example of the annual JLA-JSA crossovers ever written, the quest for the Unknown Soldier of Victory represented perfectly the virtues inherent in each annual crossover between the two immortal teams. Just as the heroes of the JLA and JSA rediscovered their forgotten comrades, so, too, did the fans rediscover long-lost friends, valiant heroes who'd gone before. For 23 years, the annual crossovers were a time of reflection, a time for young comics fans to reconnect with the generation that had laid the foundation for the current one. The stories were at times shamelessly sentimental, yet always inspiring. So much so, in fact, that they were wholly responsible for inspiring two of today's most lu-

minary comics talents, Mark Waid and James Robinson.

"The crossovers were the thing that fueled my passion for the JLA," said *JLA: Year One* and *Kingdom Come* writer Waid. "It was something about the notion of seeing not only your favorite heroes together, but also a bunch of crusty old heroes nobody had seen in 20 years and getting to know them. They were absolute magic."

But then came *Crisis on Infinite Earths*, and the majesty of the two teams' annual meetings somehow dissipated. After *Crisis* rewrote DC's continuity, the crossovers, stories whose very structure depended on the existence of multiple Earths, simply faded away. Unheralded, 1985 saw the final team-up between the legendary teams, yet, like a theatrical performance where the audience neglects to attend, no one seemed to notice.

Yet now, in 1998, we have reason to commemorate the groundbreaking team-ups. As DC releases its hardcover collection of *Crisis on Infinite Earths*, reminding young and old fans alike how it felt to have more than one Earth, it's time to celebrate the JLA-JSA crossovers on this, the 35th anniversary of their origin.

To borrow a phrase, return with us now to those thrilling days of yesteryear.

The birth of a tradition. As recently recounted in *CBG* #1300, the seeds of the first crossover came in *Flash* #123 (Sep 61), "The Flash of Two Worlds." After The Flash made a couple more visits to Earth-2, fans got their wish for a revival of The Justice Society of America and the first team-up with The Justice League of America in *Justice League of America* #21 and #22, followed by another crossover, that introduced Earth-3, in *JLA* #29 and #30.

By the second team-up's end, a tradition had been born: The two super-teams would meet annually, in titanic two-part (and later, three-part and five-part) stories, to combat whatever menaces fate would throw at them. With every passing year, fans were treated to the return of more and more members of the JSA's extensive ranks, heroes like Dr. Mid-Nite, Sandman, and Mr. Terrific. Little did DC know that by reintroducing so many heroes from yesteryear, it was laying the foundation for some of comics' greatest stories, lying dormant in the young minds of fans who would one day shape the industry.



During the run of the *Batman* TV show in the '60s, the *Caped Crusader* was prominently featured on the cover of most *JLA* issues. In the case of issue #55, the *Robin of Earth-2* took center stage.

"I remember it as if it were yesterday. I hopped on board with issue #47," said Waid, reminiscing about his first issue of *Justice League*. "It was the second part of that year's crossover with a big Batman on the cover fighting Anti-Matter Man. That was one of the highest-selling issues of *Justice League* of all time, which I know from looking at the sales figures, because that was the one that hit right after the *Batman* TV show came out. That's also why Batman was so huge on the cover and everyone else was so teeny. I'd already seen the TV show, so that's what brought me in, but I think one of the things that made me stay was not just the JLA heroes, but also these funky JSA guys, including Sandman with that goofy gasmask and a wardrobe that only a color-blind man could love. But the team-up is certainly what pulled me in, and to this day I can still rattle off all the issue numbers of every JLA-JSA team-up."

Robinson remembers. A similar passion was emerging in the mind of a young James Robinson, who discovered the annual team-ups when they were reprinted in black-and-white in Australia, where he was living at the time.

"The crossovers were incredibly nostalgic for me; they were my favorite things in comic books," said Robinson, writer of such JSA-influenced series as *The Golden Age* and *Starman*. "Basically, they inspired me to write nearly everything I have I mean, that's where I was first exposed to Starman, as he flew up to fight that creature in the sky, Aquarius, in issues #73 and #74, the same issue where [Black Canary's husband] Larry Lance died

That was the first time I encountered Starman. When you're a kid, that's exciting to see a character that's green and red, because very few characters were — and also that he had the same kind of boots as Superman, with those little bits cut out of the top. Little, stupid things like that stick in your head. That was something that really excited me, inspired me, as a fan.

"Of course, right at that time I also found that 100-page issue DC did [DC 100-Page Super Spectacular #6], with a great Neal Adams wraparound cover on it. That one had the first Justice League-Justice Society team-up reprinted in it, which was a very exciting find for me. It also had a Johnny Quick story and a Vigilante story in it, ironically neither done by Mort Meskin, who created both characters and was a genius, but I think that issue also was a spur for me, because you'll notice I wrote Johnny Quick so prominently into *The Golden Age*, and I wrote that Vigilante mini-series. Basically, everything about the crossovers were everything I liked about comic books."

By the early 1970s, the team-ups had settled into a certain pattern. Most involved an annual social gathering, usually held on Earth-1, wherein the heroes of both Earths chose to meet and compare notes. Usually, these friendly occasions were interrupted by some kind of crisis — one compelling enough to demand the attention of both teams.

Another tradition, although not strictly adhered to, was the introduction of new Earths. Throughout the 23-year history of the crossovers, fans were introduced to Earths 1, 2, and 3, as well as Earth-



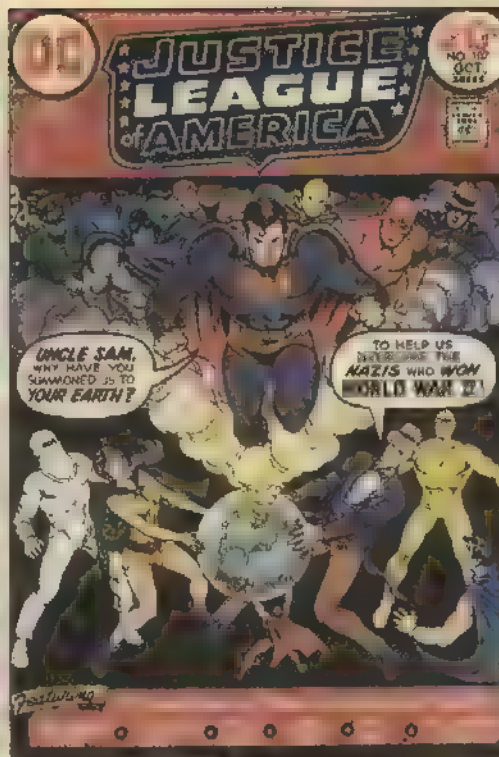
Perpetual back-up team The Seven Soldiers of Victory were returned to action in the 10th annual JLA-JSA crossover in #100-102.

X, populated by the Quality Comics characters of the 1940s in a realm in which the Axis had won World War II; Earth-S, where the Marvel Family and other Fawcett heroes lived; and Earth-Prime, our own world in which the heroes of the other Earths are merely characters in comic-book adventures. In that team up, *JLA* #123-124, writers Elliot S. Maggin and Cary Bates, as well as Editor Julie Schwartz, made guest appearances, fighting alongside and against the JLA-JSA.

Which all goes to prove that, legendary though they all were, some crossovers were more legendary than others. And some were just downright forgettable.

"Of the bad ones, 'Crisis on Earth-A' was my favorite," said Waid, referring to the third team-up — from #37 and #38. In it, the Johnny Thunder of Earth-1 took control of the Earth-2 Johnny Thunder's Thunderbolt, ordering it to go back in time and arrange it so the Justice League members never became super-heroes. Instead, the evil Johnny Thunder had his villainous friends replace the JLA members at the crucial moments in their development, guaranteeing that criminals would gain the JLA's powers. "There were these replacements for the JLA who had been given their powers," Waid said, laughing. "I mean, OK, maybe you can give me the blond criminal Superman with the crewcut, but you can't give me the criminal J'onn J'onzz! These guys came from other freakin' planets; they didn't have their powers given to them!"

"Another one of my all-time favorites is from #91-92, the one that concentrated on the Robins, the dual Dick Graysons. The Earth-2 Dick Grayson had the butt-ugliest costume you've ever seen in your life, and Earth-1's Robin was wearing the second-ugliest costume you've ever seen. The Earth-2 Robin gave the costume to the Earth-1



The JLA-JSA crossovers introduced a multitude of Earths to the DC universe, including (left to right): Earth-A, Earth-X, and Earth-S.

Robin and said, 'Here, I wouldn't wear this, you wear it.' It's pretty hideous stuff. Those are pretty memorable."

Still, for every crossover that featured momentous lapses in logic, there were others whose stories just sang. "I loved the one with the Freedom Fighters, 'Crisis on Earth X,'" said Robinson, referring to #107-108. "I think I liked that one because I was encountering characters I'd never even heard of. I'd heard of Phantom Lady and Black Condor, but I'd never heard of The Human Bomb or The Ray and I found that very exciting. It was so simple, such an enjoyable story — and, given that there were so many characters being introduced, it was such a well-crafted story."

Many agree that the 10th annual crossover (#100-102) was the best ever. Whereas previous team-ups

by Gold and Silver Age writer Gardner Fox were notable for the awesome precedents they established and the sheer wonder of seeing both teams together, Len Wein's three-part quest for "The Lost Soldier of Victory" set the standard by which all other crossovers would be judged.

"Ah, The Seven Soldiers of Victory, an absolutely terrific one," said Waid. "I didn't know any of these characters, I had no idea who The Shining Knight was or Crimson Avenger or any of these fellas. The thing that made it cool for me as a kid was that it was written with characters that actually had personalities, there was such great character interplay. Len Wein was writing it then, and there was actual characterization, as opposed to previous issues where it was just a bunch of guys in suits. The earlier ones were terrific, but they were a) completely formulaic, and b) completely plot driven. There wasn't a shred of character in those things. If you switched around the word balloons, it wouldn't make a difference. But with The Seven Soldiers of Victory, everything rang true."

Just as the series evolved tremendously from a writing standpoint, so, too, did the art continue to dazzle the readers. "For me, one of the reasons all the crossovers were so terrific and inspiring was, of course, the art was so wonderful," said Robinson. "The ones from the late '60s had art by Dick Dillin and George Klein. Klein was one of the great inkers of all time, and his work has been somewhat forgotten, but when he worked at Marvel with Gene Colan and John Buscema, and when he worked at DC with Dick Dillin, he was brilliant. Then on The Freedom Fighters crossover

it was Dick Dillin and Dick Giordano, and that was also beautiful art that made the issue all the better."

Running out of gas. Unfortunately, soon after reaching the pinnacle of crossover achievement, the annual team-ups began to sputter ever so slightly. Natural, of course, considering the challenge of creating enemies who could realistically challenge the collective might of Superman, Martian Manhunter, Green Lantern, Doctor Fate, and The Spectre, year in and year out. It was only natural to hit a few bumpy spots along the road.

After a few years of sub-par stories, the creative team decided to try something different: the only murder mystery in the 23-year history of the crossovers. Mr. Terrific, the longtime Justice Society member who'd made precious few appearances since the team-ups began, was murdered, and Batman blamed the readers.

On the cover of #172, the Dark Knight Detective exhorted the fans to discover for themselves the foul plot behind a legend's death.

Unfortunately, the way the mystery played out left most fans furious: The Golden Age Flash committed the crime while under the influence of the Spirit King. Understandably, the readers had reason to be upset. When legends meet, their fans neither expect nor want them to kill one another.

"It was such a cheat!" cried Waid, still angry after all these years. "I remember being so upset, because Batman's on the cover pointing out at us, saying, 'You! You killed Mr. Terrific!' And yet Flash is standing behind him! I remember when I was looking at the cover, I thought, 'Well, clearly it couldn't be

him.' Because I was taking this deadly seriously, I was scouring the issue looking for clues, only to find out I was gypped, that it didn't exist. Flash did it while under the control of The Spirit King. Oooooohhhh, The Spirit King! Yeah, get real. Mr. Terrific hadn't been seen in so long. He'd been seen in little bits, but never really been dealt with forever, and the only reason they brought him back was to kill him. Just didn't seem right."

Trying to recapture the grandeur and majesty of the series' early offerings, the team-ups hit another high note when the Secret Society of Super Villains reformed under the direction of the Ultra-Humanite. This three-part tale from 1981 was also notable for having been drawn by George Pérez. Soon after, however, the series faltered once more. To commemorate the 20th annual crossover, the creative team expanded the roster of heroes to include the All-Star Squadron in 1982's five-part saga, "Crisis on



In addition to The Justice Society and Justice League, the later crossovers featured other super-teams, including The Legion of Super-Heroes and The All-Star Squadron.



Earth-Prime." In it, the JLA and JSA return to the days of World War II to prevent Degaton from taking over the world and destroying Earth-Prime.

"I think the moment you start having time travel, it's a very tricky thing," said Robinson. "When you've got characters meeting younger versions of characters that they know in the present, it just becomes a big mess. There are too many questions that the writer opens, and often the writer won't ask those questions because he knows he has to answer them, but we the readers know that those questions need to be asked. So you're immediately going in there handicapped. So that may have been a case of the writer trying to be too clever."

The next year's crossover, "Crisis in the Thunderbolt Dimension," set a dangerous precedent: It was the first in a long, tragic line of ret-cons ("retroactive continuity" events) to affect the annual series. Black Canary's history was retroactively altered to the point at which the heroine we all knew and loved wasn't herself — she immediately

ly, retroactively, became her own daughter. It was an interdimensional tale of magic spells and mental transference and, while it served to explain why a Golden Age heroine was so young and vivacious in the 1980s, it also set a dangerous precedent.

For years, editors struggled to contain DC's ever-expanding multiverse. From the two worlds created in 1963, there were now at least eight, with more seemingly around every corner. The powers that be began wondering whether their multi-generational universe was becoming too unwieldy and too confusing for new fans to grasp. Huge changes were already in the works, as Marv Wolfman and George Pérez readied themselves to streamline DC into one universe with *Crisis on Infinite Earths*, the year-long saga whose name was derived from the very crossovers it would soon obliterate.

A crossover during 'Crisis.' "They did a JLA-JSA-Infinity Inc. crossover late in the game, although few people remember it because of the hullabaloo going on at the time with *Crisis*," said



Earth-3 and its Crime Syndicate was introduced in the second JLA/JSA crossover.

Waid, referring to #244, the very last crossover. "It's not really a traditional crossover, focusing on one or two different guys, lame characters like Steel [the first one]. Unfortunately, by that time, I don't think people were really paying attention anymore. It's too bad."

Sadly, what began as an event of mythic proportions ended on a low note, unheralded and unmourned. By the time *Crisis on Infinite Earths* ended, Earths 1 and 2 had never existed; therefore, any crossovers among the heroes of those two worlds technically never happened. What had been a grand tradition for 23 years became somewhat of a professional embarrassment, another tricky problem the Continuity Police had a hard time explaining away. And, given that The Justice Society was soon exiled to limbo in 1986's *Last Days of the Justice Society Special*, a fate they were mercifully soon saved from, there was apparently no longer a need for yesterday's legends to meet the heroes of tomorrow.

After 23 years, the venerable JLA-JSA crossover saga was over.

But wait! There's more! In 1998, however, the comics industry is a different place than it was in 1985, and, 35 years after the two teams first met, there is renewed interest in the annual Justice League-Justice Society pairings. Whereas most of the magic had long since left the series by its conclusion, a lack of crossovers for the past 13 years has left fandom anxious for a return to past glories. Comics readers seem to be clamoring for new JLA-JSA team-ups and, amazingly enough, even a return to

the multiverse

Despite the excitement surrounding *Crisis* and its subsequent creation of a new and streamlined history, fans and creators alike have mourned for several years the passing of the Earth-1/Earth-2 legacy. "Oh, I constantly get nostalgic for Earth-2," said Waid. "I don't know anybody over the age of 30 who doesn't. I mean, it wasn't that complicated. One team's on one Earth, the other's on the other Earth. All the people who said it was too complicated and the fans who couldn't understand it should look at the X-Men today! They understand that, but they couldn't understand that Doctor Fate's on Earth-2?"

Robinson concurred, "I'm incredibly nostalgic for Earth-2. Obviously, hindsight is 20/20, but the big mistake DC made was, yes, there were too many worlds, it was too confusing — although obviously we understood it, so it couldn't have been all that confusing. But had they begun to shrink it all down and have worlds die until you had only Earths 1 and 2 and then they managed to save both of them: I think that would have been very easy to understand. We could have gone on from there and it would have been a lot easier."

"I can understand it, of course, because every time they tried to do characters set on Earth-2, they never caught on because the continuity wasn't overriding enough — like The Huntress never caught on, because nothing ever affected the big picture, which was always Earth-1. It's very likely Starman would not have been as successful as it has become had it been a series set on Earth-2. So it helped a writer, but I still

wish DC would have kept Earth-2 so that all the stuff with old characters and old Batman stories and all that could have just stayed the way it was and there wouldn't be all this ret-conning that goes on now."

Taking advantage of the sentimental attitude throughout the industry, DC has made an announcement that's brought renewed, unbridled enthusiasm to Silver Age fans. Despite the fact that many of the lights of the great Justice Society have gone out, one by one — and the remainder are far beyond mandatory retirement age — fan and creator support has convinced DC to publish a new series devoted to the modern-day exploits of the JSA, as written by Robinson. Although still in the development stages, there is one confirmed detail: The Justice Society will again team up with their Justice League counterparts once each year.

"I would be errant to say too much, because nothing has been decided," said Robinson, "but it's pretty much agreed that crossovers will happen on a regular basis. I don't know the why of it, though, or how they will come about. Will there be an event that will cause it, a new one that will have to happen every year? Or will there be something more organic? The old crossovers were set up as. The two teams would meet once a year, more of a social thing, then hijinks would ensue. I don't know if that will be the case. So at the moment, it is a plan that there will be regular crossovers, but I couldn't tell you how or why. The one thing we've talked about is somehow fixing Hawkman — and, if I can do that, I can die a happy man. But that's very tentative."

CRISIS ON THE ONLY REMAINING EARTH

By Scott Brick

For fans who wonder how DC's streamlined continuity has affected the 23 JLA-JSA adventures, stories that relied so heavily upon the existence of separate but equal worlds, it seems as though a new project will soon answer all questions. Mike Barr is writing a one-shot special that will address how the heroes of two Earths met for the first time, despite the fact that there have never been two Earths. "It's retelling the first meeting between the JLA and JSA in terms of the modern DC universe," said Barr. "Oddly enough, no one had ever re-interpreted that meeting in the terms of the modern continuity before."

Given the fact that the first crossover featured the two Earths as a central plot point, the current version of "Crisis on Earth One" and "Crisis on Earth Two" will necessarily be different in both form and content. For Barr, however, more important than the difference in Earths will be the alteration in each character's motivation.

"Before, in the original DC universe, Superman was the first super-hero," said Barr. "He was the standard by which all were judged. With the modern DC continuity, however, we have Superman being the last super-hero. In a sense, Superman is the pinnacle, the peak of evolution, if you see what I mean. So what we have now is a world where The Justice Society, during their salad days in World War II, didn't know Superman; he didn't exist at the time."

"So now, one of the strong points in the retelling of this story becomes: How does The Justice Society, and especially the non-powered members, react to seeing the world's greatest super-hero? A lot of them start wondering, 'Wait, are we obsolete now?' Especially because, in The Justice Society, they have a lot of what I like to call the Costumed Wrestler characters, guys who have no superpowers whatsoever: like Wildcat, Mr. Terrific, and The Atom. So how do these guys feel in the modern continuity, now that they're getting upwards of 75 years old? What does the Golden Age Atom do when he sees someone like Superman? Is his attitude, 'Why should I do this? I should just hang up my uniform. Is there any place for me?'"

Although DC has yet to place the project on its schedule, it's been officially approved and even hinted at in the recent *JLA in Crisis Secret Files*. Barr is hard at work, anxious for the opportunity to retell this legendary tale. "I never thought I'd get the chance to work on The Justice Society," he said, "but I'm grateful that I am. I just decided, if you're going to do it, let's do it up right. Every active member of the Justice Society from the Golden Age will be in there, including the Costumed Wrestlers. The challenge will be finding something for them to do!"

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POV

POINT OF VIEW

by Mark EVANIER



Years ago, I wrote several shows for a man who owned a semi-big TV production company. Why he kept hiring me, I have no idea, for we agreed on absolutely nothing.

Now Appearing

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November 7

Tom Grindberg (artist of various Superman titles) and **Michael Bair** (artist of *JLA: Year One*) at Funny Books, 182 Hamilton St., New Brunswick, New Jersey 08901 from 1 to 6 p.m.

Chris Golden and **Tom Sniegowski** (co-authors of *Punisher*, *Shi*, and *Vampirella*) at The Comic Book Palace, 620 Primrose St., Haverhill, Massachusetts 01830, from 1 to 3 p.m.

Paul Dini (producer of *The New Batman/Superman Adventures* and writer of *Superman: Peace on Earth*) at Golden Apple, 7711 Melrose Ave., Hollywood, California from 2 to 4 p.m.

Batton Lash and **Bill Morrison** (two of the creators on *Bart Simpson's Treehouse of Horror #4*) at Night Flight Comics, Cottonwood Mall, 4835 S. Highland Dr., Salt Lake City, Utah 84117. For times, call (801) 272-8343

November 11

Matt Hawkins and **John Stinson** (creative team of *Lady Pendragon*) at Golden Apple, 7711 Melrose Ave., Hollywood, California from 2 to 8 p.m.

November 12

Steve Lieber and **Greg Rucka** (creative team of *White Out*) at Golden Apple, 7711 Melrose Ave., Hollywood, California from 3 to 5 p.m.

November 14

Tara Talan (creator of *Galaxion*) at Dewey's Comic City, 19A Waverly Place, Madison, New Jersey, 07940, from noon to 2 p.m.

Six writers and artists for *Resident Evil* at Golden Apple, 7711 Melrose Ave., Hollywood, California from 2 to 4 p.m.

If I wanted to set a scene outdoors, he wanted it indoors. If I wanted to hire the blonde actress, he wanted to hire the brunette. One time, the Associate Producer came in and asked us what kind of food the caterer should serve at dinner. The producer said, "Mexican," at the exact same instant I said, "Italian."

There were times when I felt as though I were trapped in the Monty Python Argument Clinic. (I will call this producer Myron, though he would probably insist I call him Harry.)

Such contrariety can sometimes make for a stimulating creative environment. Sometimes.

At other times, it can bring invention to a screeching halt, impeding all progress, bringing all to outright hostility. In some offices, it can lead to threats of firing/quitting (pick one) or, at least, vast amounts of energy being expended on something other than making the show good.

Stephen Sondheim once said, when embarking on a new Broadway musical, that the most important thing is to make sure that everyone is doing the same show. My worst experiences in television prove Mr. Sondheim correct; even when you have talented people working together, if they have disparate visions, what gets on the screen can easily wind up being a compromise that represents no one's concept.

One guy wants it red, another wants it yellow — and you wind up making it orange, not because that's what it should be, but because that's what ends the debate. (Sometimes, you can't even arrive at that kind of compromise and you wind up making it blue, just so nobody wins, everybody loses.)

The most destructive of these quarrels — painful to be in, ruinous to the production — are those wherein the spat devolves into some inane power game. You know the type: the kind where people are fighting, not to prove they're right, but just to prove they have some standing. I once won an argument with a director, after which he turned to me and said, "The next time we have a dispute, we're doing it *my way*, even if you're the one who's right."

I had those kinds of battles —

Hear ye, hear ye: Show Biz Court is now in session

and every other variety — when I worked with Myron, the producer who would prefer I call him Harry. What made those shows workable — what allowed us to get them on the air with a minimum of bloodshed — was the presence on Myron's staff of a rabbi.

That's "rabbi" with a small "r." In the Jewish faith, a rabbi (pronounced "rabb-eye") is a spiritual leader who leads religious services, counsels members of his synagogue, officiates at ceremonies, and teaches, among other duties. This is not the kind of rabbi I'm talking about in this article.

In show business, an uncaptialized rabbi is a man who displays enough kindness, wisdom, and experience that people are apt to heed his counsel. He need not be Jewish — though all the show biz rabbis I've met have been. He also need not be an older man — or even a man at all — though, again, I've yet to encounter an exception.

What he needs is to project sanity and understanding such that his decision is accepted by all. When a conflict is reaching meltdown proportions, the matter is brought before the rabbi and he settles it.

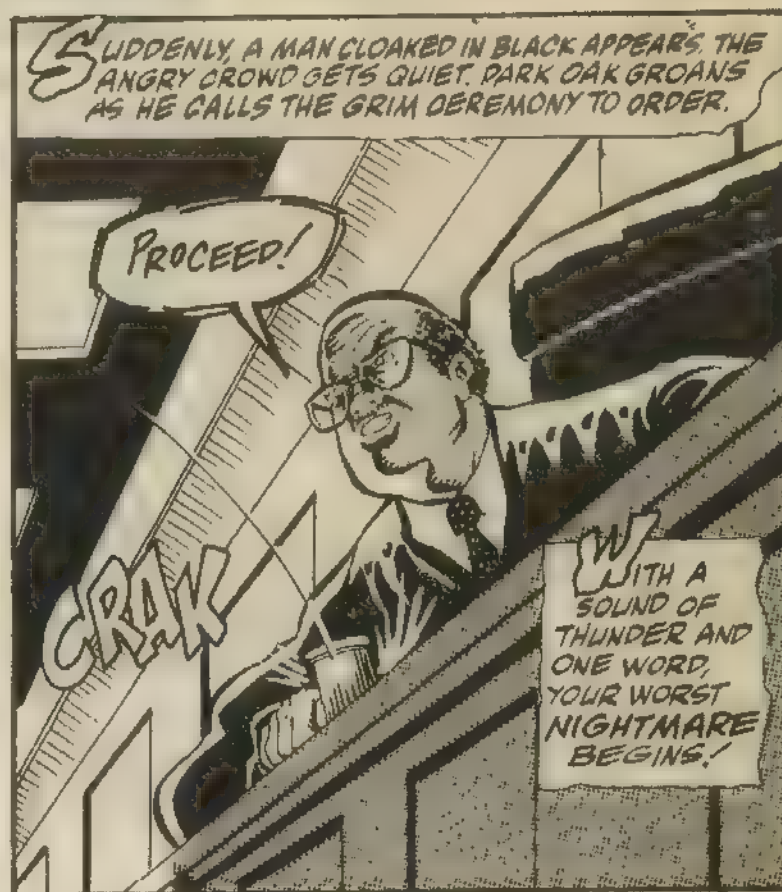
The secret of being a rabbi is to make certain that all the combatants retain some measure of dignity, and that neither loses nor wins. Even if he thinks one guy is full of Bandini, he says things like, "Each of you has a valid point," and, "We all have to work together," and, "I'm sure we can arrive at a workable solution."

Sometimes, he steers you to those unfortunate resolutions where everyone is happy only because nobody got his way. Still, that can be preferable to spending all eternity in gridlock. Whenever Myron and I had a disagreement we couldn't settle between us, we would take it to the rabbi. This did not happen often — no more than three or four times a day.

We would truck down the hall to the rabbi's office and sit before his desk. I would tell my point of view, Myron would tell his point of view, and we would tell the rabbi that the only thing we could agree upon was that neither of us was changing his mind.

The rabbi was an older man — wizened and unflappable. He would hear us both out, then he would spend a few minutes cleaning his glasses, stalling while deciding what to do. Finally, he would speak in calm, rabbinical tones...

"Well, as I see it, each of you has a valid point," he would say, even though he knew darn well that only one of us had a valid point and it



Could one of *Batton Lash's* judges from *Wolff & Byrd, Counselors of the Macabre* preside over *Show Biz Court*?

was me. "We all have to work together and I'm sure we can all find a workable solution."

Then he would propose one of those solutions where nobody wins — but it's OK, because nobody loses, either. We would agree to the compromise and that would be the final word on the matter. Production could resume.

At first, I thought this rabbi was an uncommonly wise man and I marveled at his Solomon-like ability to find a common ground between two men who were in separate orbits. Eventually, though, I realized that there was no great foresight being employed. The man was merely adding whatever I wanted to whatever Myron wanted and then dividing by two.

If I wanted six extras in a scene and Myron wanted 10, we wound up with eight.

Or if I insisted a scene be three minutes long and Myron was determined it run no longer than two, the scene would end up being two minutes and 30 seconds in length.

This did not require great wisdom. It merely involved knowing how to average.

Where it got tricky was in the non-numeric quarrels — but even then, all the rabbi did was split the difference. If Myron thought an actor should wear a tuxedo and I thought he should be in casual clothes, the rabbi would suggest we put the guy

in a sport coat.

Or if I wanted to do a bit about skateboards and Myron wanted to do a bit about ice skating, the rabbi would decree we should do something on roller skating. Halfway in between.

Or if Myron felt we should hire a big-name guest star for a role, and I felt it should be played by an unknown, the rabbi would settle it by booking Cesar Romero.

Once I understood the principle, I naturally began to sabotage it. If Myron wanted the scene to run two minutes and I felt it should be three, I'd go in and demand it be four minutes long. Then the rabbi would say, "Well, as I see it, each of you has a valid point." Then he would say, "We all have to work together and I'm sure we can all find a workable solution." Then he would decide the sketch should be three minutes long.

This worked very well until Myron figured it out, too. He started adjusting his demands in the other direction to compensate. The rat.

Most of the time though, a rabbi is a handy thing to have around. Alas, it's getting so that few of the companies I work for have anyone on the premises who can fulfill that function. All the good rabbis seem to be retiring or dying off.

Therefore, I came up with an
(Continues on Page 64)

**P.O. Box 2057
98 Madison Avenue
Red Bank, NJ 07701**



JES COMICS

To order or reserve books, phone
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ADVENTURE		45.00	4.00	48.00	1.00	49.00	1.00	Tom & Jerry's Toy Fox	446 F	1.00	49.00	47.00	0.00	48.00	44.00	73.00	MY GREATEST ADVENTURE	30.00	4.00	1.00	1.00	TALES TO ASTONISH	1.00	VOYAGE TO THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA	1.00		
ADVENTURES OF JERRY LEWIS		21.00	2.00	22.00	1.00	23.00	1.00	Vacation in Disneyland	446 F	1.00	49.00	47.00	0.00	48.00	44.00	73.00	HOUSE OF SECRETS	30.00	4.00	1.00	1.00	STEVE ZODIAC & THE FIREBALL KLS	1.00	WALT DISNEY COMICS & STORIES	1.00		
ALL AMERICAN MEN OF WAR		37.00	3.00	38.00	1.00	39.00	1.00	DENNIS THE MENACE	446 F	1.00	49.00	47.00	0.00	48.00	44.00	73.00	MUCKLEBERRY HOUND	30.00	4.00	1.00	1.00	STRAIGHT ARROW	1.00	WHITNEY COMICS	1.00		
ALLEY OOP (1949)		26.00	2.00	27.00	1.00	28.00	1.00	DETECTIVE (Same boxed)	446 F	1.00	49.00	47.00	0.00	48.00	44.00	73.00	HUEY DEWEY & LOUIE	30.00	4.00	1.00	1.00	STRANGE ADVENTURES	1.00	WILD WILD WEST	1.00		
AMAZING SPIDER MAN		32.00	3.00	33.00	1.00	34.00	1.00	254 C. Continental mess	446 F	1.00	49.00	47.00	0.00	48.00	44.00	73.00	MAD	30.00	4.00	1.00	1.00	TEX MORGAN	1.00	WORLD'S FINEST	1.00		
BATMAN		25.00	2.00	26.00	1.00	27.00	1.00	254 C. Continental mess	446 F	1.00	49.00	47.00	0.00	48.00	44.00	73.00	MAGNUS, ROBOT FIGHTER	30.00	4.00	1.00	1.00	THOR	1.00	WORLD'S FINEST	1.00		
BEST OF DONALD DUCK & NICK SCROOGE		24.00	2.00	25.00	1.00	26.00	1.00	254 C. Continental mess	446 F	1.00	49.00	47.00	0.00	48.00	44.00	73.00	MAN THING	30.00	4.00	1.00	1.00	TIM HOLT	1.00	WORLD'S FINEST	1.00		
BEVERLY HILLBILLIES		3.00	3.00	4.00	1.00	5.00	1.00	254 C. Continental mess	446 F	1.00	49.00	47.00	0.00	48.00	44.00	73.00	IRON MAN	30.00	4.00	1.00	1.00	TIM HOLT	1.00	WORLD'S FINEST	1.00		
BEWARE THE CREEPER		2.00	2.00	3.00	1.00	4.00	1.00	254 C. Continental mess	446 F	1.00	49.00	47.00	0.00	48.00	44.00	73.00	ISPY	30.00	4.00	1.00	1.00	TIM HOLT	1.00	WORLD'S FINEST	1.00		
BEWITCHED		8.00	8.00	9.00	1.00	10.00	1.00	254 C. Continental mess	446 F	1.00	49.00	47.00	0.00	48.00	44.00	73.00	JETSON	30.00	4.00	1.00	1.00	TIM HOLT	1.00	WORLD'S FINEST	1.00		
BLACK CAT (HARRY)		8.00	8.00	9.00	1.00	10.00	1.00	254 C. Continental mess	446 F	1.00	49.00	47.00	0.00	48.00	44.00	73.00	JETSON	30.00	4.00	1.00	1.00	TIM HOLT	1.00	WORLD'S FINEST	1.00		
BLACK PANTHER		16.00	16.00	17.00	1.00	18.00	1.00	254 C. Continental mess	446 F	1.00	49.00	47.00	0.00	48.00	44.00	73.00	JETSON	30.00	4.00	1.00	1.00	TIM HOLT	1.00	WORLD'S FINEST	1.00		
BLUE BEETLE		16.00	16.00	17.00	1.00	18.00	1.00	254 C. Continental mess	446 F	1.00	49.00	47.00	0.00	48.00	44.00	73.00	JETSON	30.00	4.00	1.00	1.00	TIM HOLT	1.00	WORLD'S FINEST	1.00		
BLUE BEETLE V2 #1 (1964 VG)		16.00	16.00	17.00	1.00	18.00	1.00	254 C. Continental mess	446 F	1.00	49.00	47.00	0.00	48.00	44.00	73.00	JETSON	30.00	4.00	1.00	1.00	TIM HOLT	1.00	WORLD'S FINEST	1.00		
BOBBY SHERMAN		2.00	2.00	3.00	1.00	4.00	1.00	254 C. Continental mess	446 F	1.00	49.00	47.00	0.00	48.00	44.00	73.00	JETSON	30.00	4.00	1.00	1.00	TIM HOLT	1.00	WORLD'S FINEST	1.00		
BOOMERANG (Gold Key)		24.00	2.00	25.00	1.00	26.00	1.00	254 C. Continental mess	446 F	1.00	49.00	47.00	0.00	48.00	44.00	73.00	JETSON	30.00	4.00	1.00	1.00	TIM HOLT	1.00	WORLD'S FINEST	1.00		
BORN KARLOFF THRILLER		25.00	2.00	26.00	1.00	27.00	1.00	254 C. Continental mess	446 F	1.00	49.00	47.00	0.00	48.00	44.00	73.00	JETSON	30.00	4.00	1.00	1.00	TIM HOLT	1.00	WORLD'S FINEST	1.00		
BUY COMICS		7 FR. (Continental mess)	15.00	16.00	1.00	17.00	1.00	254 C. Continental mess	446 F	1.00	49.00	47.00	0.00	48.00	44.00	73.00	JETSON	30.00	4.00	1.00	1.00	TIM HOLT	1.00	WORLD'S FINEST	1.00		
BOZO (DNI)		3.00	3.00	4.00	1.00	5.00	1.00	254 C. Continental mess	446 F	1.00	49.00	47.00	0.00	48.00	44.00	73.00	JETSON	30.00	4.00	1.00	1.00	TIM HOLT	1.00	WORLD'S FINEST	1.00		
BRAIN BOY		8.00	8.00	9.00	1.00	10.00	1.00	254 C. Continental mess	446 F	1.00	49.00	47.00	0.00	48.00	44.00	73.00	JETSON	30.00	4.00	1.00	1.00	TIM HOLT	1.00	WORLD'S FINEST	1.00		
BRAVE AND BOLD		22.00	2.00	23.00	1.00	24.00	1.00	254 C. Continental mess	446 F	1.00	49.00	47.00	0.00	48.00	44.00	73.00	JETSON	30.00	4.00	1.00	1.00	TIM HOLT	1.00	WORLD'S FINEST	1.00		
SPECTACULAR		18.00	1.00	19.00	1.00	20.00	1.00	254 C. Continental mess	446 F	1.00	49.00	47.00	0.00	48.00	44.00	73.00	JETSON	30.00	4.00	1.00	1.00	TIM HOLT	1.00	WORLD'S FINEST	1.00		
DEFENDERS (Dnl 1962)		12.00	1.00	13.00	1.00	14.00	1.00	254 C. Continental mess	446 F	1.00	49.00	47.00	0.00	48.00	44.00	73.00	JETSON	30.00	4.00	1.00	1.00	TIM HOLT	1.00	WORLD'S FINEST	1.00		
DELL GIANTS		27.00	2.00	28.00	1.00	29.00	1.00	254 C. Continental mess	446 F	1.00	49.00	47.00	0.00	48.00	44.00	73.00	JETSON	30.00	4.00	1.00	1.00	TIM HOLT	1.00	WORLD'S FINEST	1.00		
Christmas Parade		27.00	2.00	28.00	1.00	29.00	1.00	254 C. Continental mess	446 F	1.00	49.00	47.00	0.00	48.00	44.00	73.00	JETSON	30.00	4.00	1.00	1.00	TIM HOLT	1.00	WORLD'S FINEST	1.00		
Mickey Mouse In Frobenland		27.00	2.00	28.00	1.00	29.00	1.00	254 C. Continental mess	446 F	1.00	49.00	47.00	0.00	48.00	44.00	73.00	JETSON	30.00	4.00	1.00	1.00	TIM HOLT	1.00	WORLD'S FINEST	1.00		
Mickey Mouse Birthday Party		27.00	2.00	28.00	1.00	29.00	1.00	254 C. Continental mess	446 F	1.00	49.00	47.00	0.00	48.00	44.00	73.00	JETSON	30.00	4.00	1.00	1.00	TIM HOLT	1.00	WORLD'S FINEST	1.00		
Moses & The 10 Commandments		27.00	2.00	28.00	1.00	29.00	1.00	254 C. Continental mess	446 F	1.00	49.00	47.00	0.00	48.00	44.00	73.00	JETSON	30.00	4.00	1.00	1.00	TIM HOLT	1.00	WORLD'S FINEST	1.00		
GAT		27.00	2.00	28.00	1.00	29.00	1.00	254 C. Continental mess	446 F	1.00	49.00	47.00	0.00	48.00	44.00	73.00	JETSON	30.00	4.00	1.00	1.00	TIM HOLT	1.00	WORLD'S FINEST	1.00		

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1970's DC SUPERHERO (NMPG=N. Mint Overstreet PG Price):

Mostly .20-.25 cover price (Action, Batman, Flash, GL, JLA, Demon, Kamandi, Mr. Miracle, Strange Adv., Supergirl, Superman, World's Finest, etc.)-

\$90 NMPG for \$30, \$200 NMPG for \$60, \$400 NMPG for \$100

1950's-1960's DELL & GOLD KEY:

DISNEY COMICS:

(Donald Duck, Mickey Mouse, WDC&S, etc., G- to VG-

5 for \$20, 10 for \$30, 20 for \$60

WARNER BROTHERS:

(Looney Tunes, Bugs Bunny, Porky Pig, etc., G- to VG-)

5 for \$20, 10 for \$30, 20 for \$60

TV & MOVIE COMICS:

(Assorted titles, no title guarantees

G- to VG-)

5 for \$30, 10 for \$50

1950's - 1960's MISC. TITLES:

(Hero, adventure & mystery titles, etc., G- to VG-) 5 for \$25, 10 for \$40, 20 for \$70

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Please include \$3 for postage. I pay postage if payment for your order is made with a postal money order. Satisfaction guaranteed. If not satisfied, please return within 7 days in same condition for a full refund. Please let me know if you have any wants. Thank you for reading.

[illegible]

**VF TO NM COLLECTION
WHOLESALE CLEARANCE!**

WHOLESALE CLEARANCE!

DC			
A Date with Judy #49	FN	\$7	
Antihero #1	NM-	\$18	
Dark Mansion #8	VF/NM	\$3	
Flash #161	VF+/NM	\$33	
Shadow #3	NM-	\$11	
Strange Sports Stories #1	VF	\$6	
Superboy #137	VF	\$12	
Superboy #152	VF+	\$8	
Young Love #119	VF+	\$5	
Marvel			
Am. Spider-Man #123	VF	\$10	
Am. Spider-Man #126	VF+	\$7	
Am. Spider-Man #125	VF/NM	\$9	
Am. Spider-Man #138	FN	\$9	
Am. Spider-Man #144	VF/NM	\$5	
Am. Spider-Man #162, #168	NM- each	\$4	
Am. Spider-Man #167	VF/NM	\$4	
Am. Spider-Man #202	VF/NM	\$8	
Am. Spider-Man #204	VF/NM	\$9	
Am. Spider-Man #206	VF/NM	\$4 50	
Am. Spider-Man #236	VF/NM	\$3 50	
Dead of Night #1	VF+	\$3	
Fantastic Four #69	VF/NM	\$28	
Fantastic Four #78	VF	\$13	
Fantasy Mstrpc. #2 (Fin Fang Foom)	VF/NM	\$8	
Hulk #118	NM-	\$18	
Marvel Spotlight #7	VF-	\$12	
Marvel Spotlight #8	VF -	\$12	
Marvel Spotlight #8	VF+	\$15	
Marvel Spotlight #9	VF+	\$13	
Marvel Spotlight #10	VF+	\$18	
Marvel Spotlight #11			
Tales to Astonish (blue cover)	VF+/NM	\$22	
Thor #158 (origin-nice!)	VF+/NM	\$38	
X-Men #105	NM	\$16	
X-Men #116, 117, 118	NM- each	\$10	
X-Men #123, 135	NM- each	\$12	
X-Men #139	NM	\$24	
Strange Tales #162	VF/NM	\$23	
Charlton			
Wheeler & the Chopper Bunch #1	NM-	\$16	
Huckleberry Hound #1	FN+	\$8	
Vengeance Squad #1	VF	\$2 50	
Dell			
Room 222	VF/VF+ (one flaw)	\$27	
Gold Key			
Bros. of the Spear #1	VF/NM	\$12	
Cao Venture #2 (only non-reprint)	NM	\$15	
Dagar #1	VF/NM	\$10	
Doctor Solar #25	NM-	\$14	
Doctor Solar #26	NM-	\$14	
Doctor Solar #27	NM-	\$14	
H-Adv. Heroes #1 (HB)	VF/NM	\$14	
Krazy Kat 31 (1983) VF/NM		\$22	
Magnus #24	NM-	\$17	
Magnus #28	VF+ (last issue)	\$14	
Owl #1	VF+	\$14	
Harvey			
Archies One Way (1972-scarce!)	VF+	\$18	
Blast Of 3-Rocketeers #1	VF/NM	\$18	
X-Files #1 Ashcan (editor)			
signed by artist/writer and cover artist!			\$14

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COMIC SHOP DIRECTORY

The following is a listing of comic shops across the country, arranged by state. Be sure to mention that you saw it in CBG!

Retailers listed in bold sell Comics Buyer's Guide in their stores. For information on how you can sell Comics Buyer's Guide in your store contact your Comics Distributor or our Bulk Sales Department at 715-445-2214.

The stores bearing the PACER logo are members of the Professional Association of Comics & Entertainment Retailers.

Stores interested in becoming a PACER member and being listed in this section should call 515-282-8192.

CONNECTICUT

Sarge's Comics Etc.
325 Route 12
Groton, CT 06340
Voice: 860-445-2646
Action Figures, Neil Gaiman Stuff,
Anime, Comics, Kung Fu Videos,
Sailor-Moon Headquarters.

FLORIDA

South Miami Comics
6927 Red Road
Coral Gables, FL 33143
305-665-4020 • 800-826-3089
Specializing In Superb Quality
Golden And Silver Age.

Whiz Bang Collectibles
952 E. Semoran Blvd.
Casselberry, FL 32707
407-260-8869
www.whizbangtoys.com
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ALABAMA

Comic Shop, The
502 Andrew Jackson Way
Huntsville, AL 35801
205-536-5186
Offering The Best In Comics And
Games.

CONNECTICUT

Legends Of Superheros
1269 West Main St.
Waterbury, CT 06708
203-756-2440
www.legendsofsuperheros.com
Exit 18 Off I-84. Daily 10-7, Wed. 1-8.
Closed Sunday.

Sarge's Comics Etc.
124 State Street
New London, CT 06320
860-443-2004 • FAX: 860-444-6826
E-mail: sarges@uconnect.net
http://www.uconnect.net/~sarges
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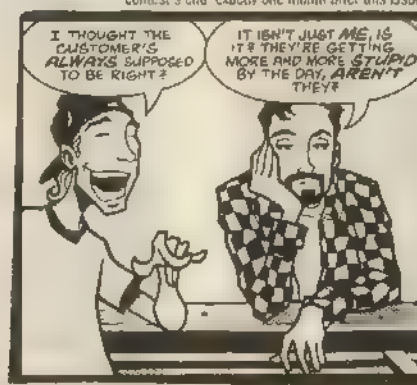
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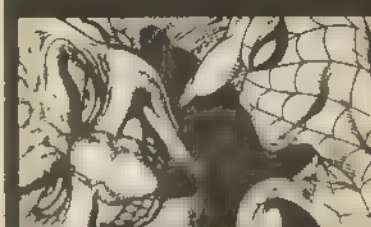
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WANTED: 101 Dalmatians Video. Animated, Marvel Masterworks #14 21 Spidey Superstones HC Fredsler. All other Fireside's. Rick Waugh, 4001 W. 242nd St. #A-4, Torrance, CA 90505 310-373-3831.

WANTED: AUTOGRAPHED picture of famed Horror and Betty Page comic writer Jeff Gelb. Personalized preferred. Joel Thingvall, 1670 Laurel #2, St. Paul, MN 55104

STEVE MCQUEEN- "An Enemy of The People" on video. Someone must have a copy of this movie? Andrew Steven c/o o ans, 1151 2nd Ave., New York, NY 10021. 212-979-9205

DON GLUT wanted: unreleased comic scripts, novels, articles or any other rarities. Chris Rumsey, PO Box 114, Besse, OK 73622.

QUESTION: DID Harlan Ellison get credit (payment?) for new Carl Russell film "Soldier"? David Hissong, 17931 New Gambier Rd Mt Vernon, OH 43050.

NUDGE NUDGE Nudge. Any Monty Python fans out there? If you have anything to do with these chaps call Steve at 305-296-1457. Thanks!

DISNEY'S LADY and the Tramp and Cinderella. Want "widescreen edition" of both for musical collection. Phil Wagner, 5526 Silver Maple Drive, Arlington TX 76018-1544

LOOKING FOR the Warner Bros cartoon "Rabbit's Kin" on VHS. Martin Bartolomeo, 781 Palham Rd., New Rochelle, NY 10805

HOT WHEELS cars and accessories from the 1960's and early 1970's. Clean out your closets and attics and make some cash. Call anytime! Gene 281-347-0648.

ORCA NEEDS you! Join for just \$5 per year and get something not found elsewhere. Curious? Write: ORCA, POB 1743, Utica, NY 13503 1743

GROO BUTTONS from 1980's San Diego Comiccon (not the cloisonne pins). Contact Gary, 8916 Blomberg St. SW, Olympia, WA 98512. 360-352-0432. E-mail: grosslam@olywa.net

LOOKING FOR anything related to James Cameron. Posters, trailers, books, etc. Crush Comics, 2869 C.V. Blvd., Castro Valley, CA 94546

RECORD OR tape of Boris Karloff "Sings" "Monster Mash". Quotes to: David Hissong, 17931 New Gambier Rd., Mt. Vernon, OH 43050

4661 MISCELLANEOUS, WANTED

CONCERT TICKETS, handbills, programs and flyers wanted from 1960's rock concerts. Rick Rann, Box 877, Oak Park, IL 60303

4700 NOVELTIES, TOYS, GAMES FOR SALE

MODEL KITS: Plastic, resin and vinyl. From and of comics, Sci-Fi, TV, movies, space, figures, etc. Old and new, hundreds available. Free sales catalog, we also buy and trade. JF Green Models, Dept CBG, PO Box 55787, Riverside, CA 92517 909-684-5300 800-807-4759, Fax 909-684-8819 e-mail cbg@greenmodels.com website: <http://www.greenmodels.com>

STAR TREK Action figures for sale. Mego, Gaiob, Playmates Robert Farney, PO Box 341071, Milwaukee, WI 53234 414-546-4627 rfarney@execpc.com

McFARLANE TOYS Monsters First Series set of four, \$65 pcd Mike 702-324-4283 or Mike@cheapnills Reno NV US

SITING PLAQUE 12x15 with \$100 and \$500 Guyana 24KT postage stamps of Captains Kirk and Picard \$35. Walter Wyzjak, 1508 Christina St., Rockford, IL 61104-4709

STAR WARS, Trek collectors, where are you? <http://members.tripod.com/~collctibleshop/> (wayline after com) has stuff you need! Toys, watches, art, ornaments, loose SW figs. 941-966-6816 buymystuff@juno.com

SUPERMAN COLORING book, 1955 Whitman NM+ (rare) \$125 OBO, Superman scrap book, 1940 VG \$150, also rare Vic 530-671-3956 before 9 PST

DOCTOR MEGO'S repros go to <http://www.drmeego.com> to see reproductions of many Mego accessories or call 516-753-1622 for a catalog

GRENDAL STATUE (1st box VF), signed \$225. Malebolgia, Spawn 2-pack (box VF+) \$50. Violator Chopper MIB, \$40 Shipping extra. 941-966-6816 buymystuff@juno.com <http://members.tripod.com/~collectibleshop/> (wayline after com)

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN Drawing Machine by Avalon for sale, NM/B, \$57 postage included! Please call to reserve. Rich Vanchus 717-829-2484 6-11pm EST. Thanks!

4700 NOVELTIES, TOYS, GAMES FOR SALE

1991 STAR Trek Enterprise Hallmark ornament \$275. 1992 Galileo \$100. 1993 Enterprise D \$55 All mint in boxes. Pop Culture, 129 E. Sherman, Hutchinson, KS 67501. 316-662-3471

STAR TREK lunch box, C-6, not in great shape but \$750-\$1,000 in C-9+ \$175 & \$5 shipping. Visa/MC. Comic Zone, 37313 Maple, Fremont, CA 94536 510-791-7406

GOLDEN WITCHBLADE action figures for sale. \$12 includes shipping. Other figures 3/\$10, also comics. SASE to Linda Mar, 11015 Freer Street, Temple City CA 91780.

GROO, 25MM carded, gaming figures, sets #705 #708 - Groo, Grooella, Sergio J. Gravo, Dragon \$12 postpaid Paul Bocci, 53 Berkley St., Valley Stream, NY 11581 516-791-2182

HOT WHEELS, The Heroes (1978) race car, The Thing, heavily creased card, unopened \$10 - postpaid Paul Bocci, 53 Berkley St., Valley Stream, NY 11581 516-791-2182.

SUPERMAN BIRTHDAY Candle Holder Set (1979) Includes 4-3/8" tall Superman figure, Mint in unopened box. \$7 pcd/ins., 2/\$12. Fritela, 16279 Laurie Ann, Redding, CA 96001-9626

1959 WHAM-O fnsbee, red with planets, mint, and "Mystery Y" fnsbee, mint, \$95 each Classic antique toys in super-duper shape. Cliff 978-927-4024

1966 CAPTAIN Action Costumes MIB: Phantom \$780 Aquaman \$650; Corgi Green Hornet MIMB \$600, GH Puzzle Set MIB \$175 Call Curtis at 415-386-5242

4701 NOVELTIES, TOYS, GAMES WANTED

MONKEES ITEMS wanted: toys games sheet music, tickets, etc. Circus Boy items also wanted. Rick Rann, Box 877, Oak Park, IL 60303

FROM THE 70's Marvel World playset, cardboard with characters 1976. Marvelmania Stationery, Marvel inflatable pillows, bumper stickers. Hal Reed, 320 Parkshore Dr., Columbia SC 29223

4701 NOVELTIES, TOYS, GAMES WANTED

MEGO WANTED! Any and all items needed for my collection Apes, heroes Titans, playsets, Trek Aliens, boxes, etc. Contact Chris at carly@id.net

SUPERMAN WANTED! I've still got plenty of cash available to buy your older Superman collectibles. Write me today! Danny Fuchs, 209-80 18th Ave., Bayside, NY 11360

PYRAMID 23 (Steve Jackson Games) The Unspeakable Oath 1, Challenge 39, 40, 47, 54 Greg Davis, 1418 North 725 West, West Bountiful, UT 84087

SPIDEY TOYS in original packaging 5" figures wanted Spiderlayer, Punisher Chameleon Jeff Dahlberg, 5130 N 2nd, Loves Park, IL 61111.

BUILT/PAINTED Garage Kits of 50's, 60's monsters. Call and tell me what's expendable in your collection. Doug Smith, 34 Erie Ave., Newton MA 02461 617-558-3256

WANTED: 1960's Marvel t-shirts of Spider-Man, Hulk, Sgt Fury and Fantastic Four in any condition. Write Steve Vano, 528 St Clair Ave., W. Toronto M6C 1A2

4721 VIDEO GAMES WANTED

FINAL FANTASY 2 and 3 for SNES Boxes and instructions preferred, but not absolutely necessary. Matt Biswell, 1626 Rossi St. Boise, ID 83706-3354

4800 FANZINES, FOR SALE

YELLOWBACK LIBRARY is a monthly magazine for collectors of Children's Series books. Sample issue \$3. Gil O'Garra, Box 36172, Des Moines, IA 50315

THE MODERATE Sized Book of Cummy Cartoons \$2 plus SASE. PO Box 131, Eddington, ME 04428. "I'd rather eat a dead ground hog" - Carlin Nelson.

4801 FANZINES, WANTED

MENOMONEE FALLS Gazette 70-71, 86 wanted. Will pay well. David Bachman, PO Box 1431, Oklahoma City, OK 73101 405-495-4386 dbachman@icon.net

4900 NEWSPAPER STRIPS, FOR SALE

PICK OUT dates. Daily and Sunday. Great Selection 1895 to 1997. Send your wantlist and SASE to: Gordon Campbell, 1124 Brookmeade Drive, Nashville, TN 37204

BIG SUNDAY comic list, \$1 (refundable). I also buy Sunday comics before 1960, pulp magazines Edgar Rice Burrough's books. Claude Held, Box 515, Buffalo, NY 14225

CATALOG #2 is now ready! Free, well illustrated list. Comic strips from 1920s, 1930s 1940s. Get yours Quick! James Doyiakos, 2221 W Lawrence, Chicago, IL 60625

TABLOID SUNDAY sections mint and complete, 16 color pages incl. Canyon, Latigo, Valiant. \$5 each. Peter Vollmann, PO Box 813, Hanalei, HI 96714 808-826-9968

HOWARD THE Duck first 10 Sundays and promo ad, \$20 Thanks. Jay Mampel, 336 East 326th St., Willowick, OH 44095 440-585-1889 lem3kids.com

4901 NEWSPAPER STRIPS, WANTED

SUNDAY COMICS wanted Large collections 1900-1960 immediate cash Trades available. Peter Maresca, 450 Monroe Drive, Palo Alto, CA 94306. pete@zenda.com Phone/FAX. 415-941-7988

SUPERMAN DAILIES from the 1950's. Xerox copies okay Cochran, PO Box 242, Planetarium Station, New York, NY 10024-0272

BUYING COLLECTIONS, Puck sections, Spirit tabs. Phone/Fax 510-666-0732. Starland Strips, 1563 Solano #155, Berkeley, CA 94707.

BUYING PRE-1930 Sunday pages, full color fulls! Paying high prices! See my "Today's Collector" ad! Michael Dice Drawer 1748, Cortez, CO 81321. 970-564-9018 E-mail oldcomix@one.net

STEVE ROPER 8/6/61, Terry and the Pirates 8/1/48, The Little King 4/2/61 Winnie Winkle 7/16/61 David Barsalou 12 Marion St. Chicopee, MA 01013

SUNDAY BLONDIE comic strip wanted from late 1986 that has Dagwood and his neighbor playing baseball. Monte Foulks, 1505 Beverly Rd., Philadelphia PA 19138

MENOMONEE FALLS Gazette 70-71, 86 wanted. Will pay well. David Bachman, PO Box 1431, Oklahoma City, OK 73101 405-495-4386 dbachman@icon.net

From
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idea. I call it the Show Biz Court.

The Show Biz Court, if and when we can ever get it up and running, would be a private agency that settles disputes between creative people. It would seek out all the surviving rabbis of show business and hire them, perhaps coaxing a few out of retirement.

Then we have to get everyone to put into their contracts that all critical creative disputes will be settled in the Show Biz Court. It's kind of like agreeing to submit to binding arbitration.

Here's how it works: Let's say we're working together and, at some point, we have a quarrel we cannot settle between ourselves. We are at a total impasse. That's when one of us says, "All right! We're taking this to the Show Biz Court!" Either side may make this demand and the other side has to go along with it.

We phone the Show Biz Court and secure an appointment, hopefully for later that day. Then we report to the offices of the Show Biz Court, where we are granted 15 minutes — and not one second more — of a rabbi's time. There would be a small fee for this service, which we would agree to split.

We are both sworn in, and then I get five minutes (carefully timed by a bailiff of the Show Biz Court) to state my position. Then you get five minutes to explain how you see the matter and what you want to do.

Then the rabbi says, "Well, as I see it,

each of you has a valid point." Then he says, "We all have to work together and I'm sure we can all find a workable solution." Then he announces a compromise —

— and that's it. End of argument. We are both contractually and morally bound to do what he says. We are also forbidden to reopen the discussion. That matter is closed forever, and, should you bring it up again, I can haul you back to the Show Biz Court and sue you. And don't think I won't do it.

The Show Biz Court would provide a few other services. For example, it seems to take forever for the Business Affairs folks at some studios to finalize a contract. I've had negotiations drag on for months with my agent trying desperately to contact them about their latest offer. Then they call back only when he's unavailable. This game of Stoop Tag can go on for weeks — months — even years.

Even when they do connect and reach some sort of harmony, that's not the end of it. In Hollywood, work is almost always begun on an oral accord with the paperwork to follow. Invariably, when they send over a contract, our side has to say, "No, that's not what we agreed to," and the battles begin anew. I have worked on shows — this is not an exaggeration — that were literally filmed, aired, and cancelled while my agent was still arguing over specific contract terms.

So, at the Show Biz Court, we will have Negotiating Chambers. If a studio wants to hire me to write something, a representative of their Business Affairs Department reports to the Show Biz Court, as does my agent. They are then locked into one of these little rooms. They are not allowed to leave until they finalize the contract on

paper.

In the Negotiating Chamber, there are chairs and a table, calculators, pads of paper, pencils, and a supply of snack foods, coffee, and soft drinks. There are also telephones and fax machines which can only connect to (a) their respective clients and (b) a secretarial pool outside, wherein contracts will be typed up and copied. No cellular phones are allowed in the Negotiating Chamber, nor is there — for obvious reasons — a bathroom.

Currently, it is said that in Hollywood, the winner in any negotiation is the person with the least to lose. Under my proposed arrangement, it would be the person with the least to lose — and the strongest bladder.

Should they prove unable to agree, the Show Biz Court can declare a Hung Negotiation. At this point, they have the option of taking it before a rabbi to mediate — or they can declare themselves hopelessly deadlocked. If the latter, then the deal is considered off, and both sides are forbidden to reopen deal-making in any manner for a period of ninety (90) days. This is to prevent either side from using the old ploy of walking out on the bargaining to scare the other side into running after them and giving in. In the Show Biz Court, if you break off negotiations, you'd better really mean it.

If and when an agreement is reached and typed up, an officer of the Show Biz Court checks with the client — me, in this case — to make sure I agree. He will previously have verified that the person representing the studio is empowered to make the deal. (Another negotiating stunt is to get you to accede to certain compromises — then they say, "Oh, the guy you've been talking to isn't authorized to finalize the

fact." They then refer it to his superior, who holds you to your concessions while refusing to honor the ones his side has made. There would be a colossal fine for sending a rep to the Show Biz Court who can't close.)

Assuming all is kosher, the magistrate will then check the payment history of the employers to see if they have been notably tardy in paying writers for their work. This is a relatively rare occurrence in show business, occurring no more than around 98% of the time. If the company is off-late or financially unstable, it will have to post a bond with the Show Biz Court in order to have the contract certified. This will ensure timely, total payment, should the Court verify that I have fulfilled my end of the agreement.

Once all this is done — preferably in one afternoon — the contract is validated. Naturally, it specifies that all creative disputes will be settled by a rabbi of the Show Biz Court.

The Show Biz Court is a terrific idea — which is amazing, when you consider that it was mine. It's such a terrific idea that, of course, it will never happen.

Still, when I'm trapped in some silly argument with a producer — or when my agent is taking weeks to finalize the final draft of the contract for a show I've long since completed — I think about it. I think about the Show Biz Court and how nice it would make everything.

And then something jolts me back to reality and I remember: This is show business. It's not supposed to be nice. It's not even supposed to be sane.

Mark Evanier can be reached at 363 S. Fairfax Ave., #303, Los Angeles, CA 90036 or in cyberspace at his new address: me@evanier.com. (Look, Ma! I'm a domain!)

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- C. DEADLINE:** For all advertising is 4:00 p.m. each Tuesday, unless otherwise stated on deadline card.
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- O. SPACE RESERVATIONS** available for camera ready ads only. Must be made prior to ad deadline. Reserved space must be paid for even if ad does not arrive on time.
- P. PRE-PRINTED INSERTS** are available in Comics Buyer's Guide. Inquire for additional information and technical specifications.
- Q. CIRCULATION** is throughout the United States and Canada by subscription and single copy sales by agents in shops and other outlets.
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Advertising
700 E. State St., Iola, WI 54990

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Tues., Nov. 10, 1998	1307	Dec. 4, 1998	Tues., Dec. 1, 1998	1310	Dec. 25, 1998
Tues., Nov. 17, 1998	1308	Dec. 11, 1998	Tues., Dec. 8, 1998	1311	Jan. 1, 1999
Mon., Nov. 23, 1998	1309	Dec. 18, 1998	Tues., Dec. 15, 1998	1312	Jan. 8, 1999

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(Cost per ad per issue; ads must run consecutively)

AD SIZE	ISSUE	ISSUES	ISSUES	ISSUES	ISSUES
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B. 2 col. x 5-3/8" (4-7/8" x 5-3/8") or 4 col. x 2-5/8" (10" x 2-5/8")	\$189.00	\$185.00	\$181.00	\$174.00	\$159.00
C. 2 col. x 11" (4-7/8" x 11") or 4 col. x 5-3/8" (10" x 5-3/8")	\$294.00	\$288.00	\$282.00	\$270.00	\$247.00
D. 4 col. x 11" (10" x 11")	\$530.00	\$519.00	\$509.00	\$488.00	\$445.00

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AD SIZE	ISSUE	ISSUES	ISSUES	ISSUES	ISSUES
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2. 1 col. x 2" (2-1/4" x 2")	\$29.50	\$29.00	\$28.00	\$27.00	\$25.00
3. 1 col. x 3" (2-1/4" x 3")	\$38.00	\$37.00	\$36.00	\$35.00	\$32.00

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Our "Classified" ads are heavily read. Base rates are 40¢ per word with discounts for multiple issues. Please print and punctuate - we are not responsible for error due to long-hand and illegible copy. For more information see classified ad form in the classified section. Credit card customers can place word ads TOLL FREE - Call 1-800-942-0673. (This is for classified word ads only.)

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Collectors Showcase Units are 3-1/4" wide x 1-5/8" high and can be bought in multiples. All typesetting is done by Krause Publications and is included in the price.

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"No-frills" advertising with a price to match. Design your own ad - just type your ad clearly on an 8-1/2" x 8-1/2" sheet of paper. We will reduce your Trader ad to fit a 1/3 page space (3-1/4" x 3-1/4"). Super Traders should be typed on an 8-1/2" x 8-1/2" sheet of paper which will be reduced to fit a 5" x 5" space.

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\$118.00	\$108.00	\$106.00	\$101.00	\$92.00

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Comics Strip ads are 10" w x 2 3/4" h and are reserved for publishers promoting their comic titles.

1 Issue	4 Issues
\$85.00	\$300.00

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"It's Hayley Mills — and Hayley Mills!"

I loved *The Parent Trap* when I was a kid. Safe in the womb of my parents' solid marriage, I was amused and entertained — there in the darkness of the theater — by the endeavors of a set of trick-photography twins to reunite their parents. Their triumph seemed inevitable: The parents would get back together again because That Was How It Should Be, and the evil, interloping new girlfriend would get her come-uppance during a camping trip at the hands of the outdoorsy girls. Nature itself struck against the home wrecker's unnatural presence.

It is 30 years later. I am a divorced father of three. I sat in the theater with my 7 year old, Ariel, watching the previews for Disney's remake of *The Parent Trap*. The twins were no longer Hayley Mills (although they remain a creation of camera fakery), but the basic thrust of the film remained the same. Ariel laughed heartily at the trailer and spoke of how much she wanted to see it when it opened.

My parents are still together, but my marriage ended more than a year ago. I no longer have the protective cocoon wherein all I know, from personal experience, is a family bound forever by vows of matrimony. My new world is one of shattered promises, of love destroyed with acrimony and hostility. Ariel's mother and I will never, ever, get back together again. In terms of its relevance to Ariel's life (and to the lives of her sisters, for that matter), *The Parent Trap* bears as much resemblance to reality as does *Bedknobs and Broomsticks* or *Herbie Goes Bananas*. (Although I admit I always wanted to see a film called *Herbie Goes Postal* in which The Lovebug goes berserk and runs down jaywalkers. But I digress ...)

When I watched *Trap* as a kid, it had no direct relevance to my life. Divorce was what happened to someone else, and it seemed (at least to me) far rarer. I personally knew no one from a divorced family. Not only does little Ariel have first-hand experience of that traumatic condition, but she still harbors hopes that somehow, in some way, her mother and I will reunite. At a recent school play, Ariel sat between her mother and me — and subtly (as subtle as a 7-year-old can be) took her mother's and my hands in either one of hers and then tried to bring those hands together. She asked me point-blank if her mother and I would ever live together again, and,

even though I said "no" as gently as I could, it still moved her to tears.

Understand: Disney has no greater enthusiast than I. We make yearly pilgrimages to the home of the mouse. But *The Parent Trap*, if Ariel does see it (in its video release, since it's safely gone from the theaters), doesn't provide nice fantasies for her in the sense that a *Mary Poppins* does. Instead, it will wind up giving her cruel hope for a real-life parallel when there is no prospect for that. Watching the parental reunion with her at the end of *Liar, Liar* was rough enough. At least that was almost off-hand. But remarriage is the *raison d'être* of *The Parent Trap*, and, consequently, viewing will be downright excruciating. Even if she says nothing about it, I'll be positive that she's thinking about it and simply being reticent.

And then there's the matter of the new significant other. I have a girlfriend now, having moved on with my life. Kathleen entered our lives a few months ago, and thus far the girls get on famously with her. But the last thing I'm going to need is the presentation of the new love as annoyance at best, monster at worst. Kathleen has taken on a significant undertaking in becoming part of our lives, but she — or a woman like her — is going to be depicted on the silver screen as The Enemy. I mean, at least in *Mrs. Doubtfire* the parents didn't reunite at the end; the mom remained with her new boyfriend. But come on, the boyfriend had to be played by no less than Pierce Brosnan. If Kathleen dumped me for Pierce Brosnan, even I wouldn't blame her. Hell, I'd dump me for Pierce Brosnan.

Thus far, the girls have been accepting of my new love life, but — particularly in Ariel's case — *The Parent Trap* is not going to help matters. And the other day we saw a trailer for yet another divorce-themed film, this one called *Stepmom*, with the dumped and divorced mom nobly played by ultra-capable Su-

The divorce dilemma(s)



"I always wanted to see a film called *Herbie Goes Postal* in which The Lovebug goes berserk and runs down jaywalkers."

san Sarandon and the hapless new girlfriend by Julia Roberts. Roberts' character is portrayed as game but clueless when it comes to dealing with children, and she is presented as being in a chess match with Sarandon for the kids' affections. One clip shows one of the kids saying to Sarandon, in regards to Roberts, "I'll hate her if you want me to."

Ariel saw the trailer, turned to me, and said eagerly, "I want to see that!" My God, if even the *Pretty Woman* can't cut the mustard as a new love interest, what hope has a mere mortal girlfriend?

I've since learned that the plot for the film involves Sarandon's character being terminally ill and having to come to terms with Roberts, who will be watching after her kids when she herself is gone. Terrific. The father (Ed Harris) walked out on the mother, Julia Roberts is clueless, and Mom is a super-capable martyr. For all I know, this may be the best film of 1998, but it promises to be such an agonizing ride, the wound so new and fresh in what remains of our family, that it's not a journey I'm anxious to take.

But then, of course, there was Ariel's already-favorite film of 1998: *Ever After*, the retelling of *Cinderella* with Anjelica Houston as the Evil Stepmother. She saw it several times; I know, I took her. It was an entertaining film and, if nothing else, it was worth it for seeing *Cinderella* haul off and deck her stepsister. Still in all — the Evil Stepmom?

I don't want or need Ariel seeing my girlfriend through redefined eyes as The Adversary. It's not as if there's an overabundance of family-oriented fare out there. Does such a sizable percentage of the upcoming kid flix have to orient it-

self around subject matter as painful as the splintering of family bonds, particularly when, more often than not, it holds out to small children a happy ending that, in real life, practically never happens? And proffer the message that parents establishing new relationships is a terrible, evil thing that throws a permanent spanner into the course of the true love their parents were meant to have all along?

I don't expect Ariel to come away from any of these films with involved schemes that will drive away Kathleen and send me back into the arms of her mother — but, cumulatively, they'll sadden her, I think, or perhaps give her a sense of freefloating resentment directed at my girlfriend. It'll make my girlfriend uncomfortable at the portrayal of someone with her status being the object of derision and hostility, not to mention being depicted as hopelessly inferior to the "original model." (At the *Stepmom* trailer, my 14-year-old, Gwen, was with me, and even she moaned at the characterization, as the same thing occurred to her.)

And, ultimately, it will sadden me as I think of the kids' disrupted lives, the mistakes, the frustrations, the long-term consequences of children from a broken home, and the tragedy of a family life shattered at its foundations. I think I may try to finesse my way around taking her to those particular films — although, with my luck, her mother will take her.

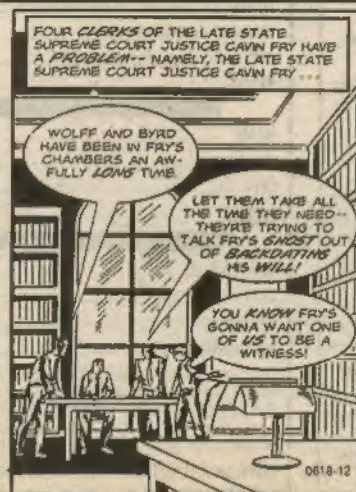
There is, however, one bright spot in all of this:

Kathleen loves to go camping. She's planning to take the kids on an outdoor overnight. It should be a nice bonding experience for all involved. Now all I have to do is hope that, while they're out there in the woods, they don't run into Pierce Brosnan.

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